

CBS says crew held in Iraq

NEW YORK (AP) — CBS News reporter Bob Simon and three crew members who disappeared in the northern Saudi desert last month are being held in Baghdad, the president of CBS News said Friday. Eric Ober confirmed a CNN report earlier Friday that the journalists have been held for two weeks in the Iraqi capital. CBS spokesman Tom Goodman said efforts are under way "to secure their safe release and return." The crew were reported missing at the Kuwait border Jan. 21, four days after the Gulf war started. CNN quoted what it called reliable sources as saying the fate of the crew would be decided by Saddam Hussein. CBS is "obviously pleased the Iraqis have allowed this information to be released," Mr. Goodman said earlier, following the CNN report. "We hope that the Iraqis recognise the four are journalists and not combatants, and were simply there to cover a story." The four were picked up by the Iraqi military jeep patrol in a remote part of the Kuwait border CNN reported. They "are still being investigated by the Iraqi intelligence service to determine the full circumstances of their capture," CNN correspondent Peter Arnett said. "Apparently, there are three categories they can fall under: Innocents who could be released, prisoners of war or spies," Arnett said. "I am told that President Saddam Hussein will personally

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جريدة ان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر عن المؤسسة المطبوعة في الأردن

PLO official denounces Cairo meeting

TUNIS (R) — A senior PLO official said Friday the United States and not its Arab allies against Iraq would decide the post-war shape of the Middle East. "It is Washington who decides the new order based on (its) hegemony," said Executive Committee member Abdallah Hourani. Eight Arab allies in the anti-Iraq coalition met in Cairo Friday to discuss regional security after the war. (see story below) Mr. Hourani told a news conference Syria was mistaken in thinking the United States would help it recover the Golani Heights as a reward for joining the coalition. "The United States does nothing that would be contrary to Israel's interests," he said. Mr. Hourani said the eight states "want to give the impression that the game is up in the Gulf war... but the Arab man in the street is not deceived."

Iraq offers to leave Kuwait as part of peace plan; Bush rejects gesture with call to oust Saddam

Initiative contingent on Mideast linkage

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ'S TOP leadership said Friday it was willing to withdraw from Kuwait, raising hopes worldwide that the 30-day Gulf war might soon be over.

Jubilant Iraqis fired rifles in the air and shook hands to celebrate the announcement, the first mention of a withdrawal from Kuwait since Iraqi troops invaded on Aug. 2.

The dramatic announcement was hedged with conditions, including the scrapping of economic sanctions, linkage to the Arab-Israeli dispute and an allied troop pullout from the Gulf.

"The Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) has announced Iraq's decision to deal with United Nations Security Council Resolution number 660... with the aim of reaching an honourable and acceptable solution, including the withdrawal," said a statement broadcast on Baghdad

Radio.

Until now, President Saddam Hussein has vowed he would never give up an inch of Kuwaiti territory, which Iraq had declared 19th province.

Iraq demanded a full ceasefire and the cancellation of all previous Security Council resolutions, including those imposing severe economic sanctions.

The RCC said a pullout from Kuwait must be linked to Israel's withdrawal from the occupied territories and occupied Syrian and Lebanese territory.

If Israel refused, it said, the Jewish state should face the same sanctions imposed on Baghdad.

The RCC, whose meetings are chaired by President Saddam, insisted that the 700,000-strong forces of the U.S.-led coalition withdraw from the region.

It demanded "a genuine democratic exercise" to decide the future of Kuwait, insisted the United Nations would apply against the

Baghdad and demanded cancellation of all Iraqi debts "and those of the region's states which were harmed by the aggression."

U.S.-led allied forces have rejected any link between Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and a solution to the Arab-Israeli dispute. They also demand the return of Kuwait's ruling Al Sabah family to power.

The announcement came exactly a month after expiry of the U.N. deadline for Iraq to leave Kuwait.

The announcement stated clearly that the RCC had accepted Resolution 660, which calls for an "immediate and unconditional" end to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait.

It also left room for manoeuvre in case Israel rejected withdrawal as it has done before. In such case, the RCC said, the United Nations would apply against the

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KING MEETS IRANIAN TEAM: His Majesty King Hussein Friday receives an Iranian parliamentary delegation headed by Mohammad Shaker and Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabyat (Petra photo).

Allied raids continue as Iraqis bury shelter victims

Combined agency dispatches

LOW-FLYING allied aircraft blasted the headquarters of Iraq's ruling Arab Baath Socialist Party in a pre-dawn attack Friday.

The warplanes struck after a series of mock air raids that shook the city after midnight (2100 GMT Thursday).

The party headquarters in the city centre apparently were vacant at the time of the attack, but the several-storey building sustained massive damage, witnesses reported.

Allied warplanes hit other targets in Baghdad in 31 bombing sorties overnight, a military communiqué said. It said the targets included "bridges and vital public utilities," but provided no details.

The communiqué from the general command of the armed forces said the allies also bombed Iraqi military targets in "the southern sector of the operation zone," a reference to Kuwait and southern Iraq.

It said that six allied warplanes were shot down.

The civil defence said 306

bodies had been retrieved by noon (0900 GMT) Friday from the wreckage of a shelter bombed by U.S. aircraft in a night-time air raid Wednesday.

The military command's communiqué, released several hours earlier, reported 293 bodies dug out from the rubble, including 91 children, 19 women and 55 teenagers.

Officials say as many as 500 people perished in the attack on the reinforced concrete structure, which the United States claims was used as a command and control centre.

Defence Minister Major General Saadi Tuma Abbas said the U.S.-led allied air war, launched Jan. 17, has "failed to realise their sick ambitions."

"Our forces have been able to absorb these attacks," he said. "Many of our modern, effective weapons have not yet been used."

He said in a ground offensive, the Iraqi military with its weapons "will deal a crushing blow to the aggressors."

Mourners marched alongside flag-covered coffins, fired auto-

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hedged with conditions, linkage to the Arab-Israeli dispute and an allied troop pullout from the emirate.

Western members on the council are likely to object to a comprehensive ceasefire if it implies any sort of truce with the Arab-Israeli conflict. Cuba and Yemen are expected to fight for negotiations and a ceasefire.

The council resolutions adopted against Iraq call for an unconditional withdrawal and any notion of conditions is expected to be opposed.

Kuwait's U.N. ambassador, Mohammad Abul Hasan, greeted the announcement from Baghdad with extreme scepticism. U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar told reporters he was still studying Baghdad's statement.

A transcript of Thursday's meeting was to be made available Friday. Normally, the United Nations gives a detailed running account while the meeting is under way.

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Security Council holds private consultations on Iraqi step

Combined agency dispatches

THE U.N. SECURITY Council postponed a scheduled debate on the Gulf war Friday so members could meet privately to discuss a conditional offer of a withdrawal from Kuwait.

The council Thursday began a closed-door formal meeting on the Gulf crisis, its first since the war broke out. Iraq's ambassador gave no hint of an intention to offer a withdrawal in the emirate.

The council started private consultations at 1700 GMT on its readiness to consider withdrawal from the war. Formal debate was due to resume at 2030 GMT.

It was scheduled to hear more than a dozen speakers, including the United Nations European Community and some non-aligned nations such as Malaysia and Pakistan who are uneasy about the heavy bombing.

Iraq's leadership announced it was willing to withdraw from Kuwait, raising hopes that the war might soon be over. The announcement was

hedged with conditions, linkage to the Arab-Israeli dispute and an allied troop pullout from the emirate.

China Thursday called the reports of civilian casualties and massive destruction caused by allied raids in Iraq "extremely grave" and offered its own plan to achieve a peaceful solution.

The debate was the first on the way of the 15-member council.

The council adjourned Thursday night after 3½ hours of debate.

Thursday's session was closed at the insistence of the United States, Britain and other countries who said the spectacle of a noisy debate and criticism of allied tactics would encourage Iraq.

A transcript of Thursday's meeting was to be made available Friday. Normally, the United Nations gives a detailed running account while the meeting is under way.

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Arab allies of U.S. dismiss Baghdad move

ARABS IN THE anti-Iraq coalition on Friday rejected an Iraqi offer to withdraw from Kuwait as unacceptable because of conditions Baghdad had attached.

Abdullah Bishara, secretary-general of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), told reporters:

"This is not comparable with the (U.N.) Security Council resolutions. The overriding fact is that Iraq has to unconditionally and immediately withdraw from Kuwait without bargaining."

He said the Gulf war would continue until all resolutions were implemented.

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, attending an eight-nation Arab conference to chart post-war Gulf security, said:

"We hope that President Saddam Hussein will change his position and not be an enemy of the entire world. Our position is that all Security Council resolutions should be implemented."

Iraq linked a withdrawal from Kuwait to a total ceasefire, removal of all foreign troops from the Gulf, an Israeli retreat from occupied Arab territory, a Syrian pullout from Lebanon and the repeal of U.N. sanctions and anti-Iraqi resolutions.

News of the statement by Iraq's ruling Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) came as foreign ministers of Arab countries opposing Iraq took a recess from their Cairo conference.

The Iraqi offer was the biggest challenge yet to the cohesion of the eight Arab states — Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

Several members of the coalition have come under attack from their own public for supporting the attack on Arab soil by foreign troops.

Morocco, the other Arab state with troops in the U.S.-led Gulf multinational force, declined to attend the Cairo meeting.

He said the Gulf war would continue until all resolutions were implemented.

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, attending an eight-nation Arab conference to chart post-war Gulf security, said:

"We hope that President Saddam Hussein will change his position and not be an enemy of the entire world. Our position is that all Security Council resolutions should be implemented."

The conference agenda has not been disclosed. Egyptian officials said major items are a post-war security structure to deter aggression, a regional ban on weapons of mass destruction and economic aid for poorer members of the coalition.

In his speech, Abdul Meguid

indicated the ministers also will discuss postwar efforts to settle the Palestinian problem in peace talks with Israel.

"We assure the Palestinian people in the occupied territories that their legitimate cause was and still is our historic cause," the

(Continued on page 5)

Oil prices, dollar in turmoil

LONDON (R) — Financial markets were thrown into turmoil Friday after Iraq said it was ready to withdraw conditionally from Kuwait as part of a negotiated Gulf war solution.

Oil prices plunged and then recovered while the dollar dipped initially before rising to the day's highs by early afternoon in Europe.

Share prices soared on the news but quickly retreated because the Iraqi announcement was hedged with conditions.

The price of gold dropped more than \$4 an ounce, but like the dollar and oil it bounced back.

"We've got panicking clients ringing in all the time," one oil futures broker said. "Nobody knows where prices will end."

North Sea Brent blend, the international crude oil benchmark, dropped more than \$2 to \$16.30 a barrel on first news of the 1130 GMT Iraqi announcement, but then recovered to around \$17.30 two hours later.

The dollar rose to a quoted high of 1.4790 marks and 130.35 yen in hectic trading and by 1330 GMT it had held on to its gains, standing around 1.4775 and 130.35.

Traders said foreign exchange activity was confused, with some quickly taking profits and others speculating on possible benefits.

U.S. says war will continue

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — President George Bush Friday called Iraq's offer to withdraw from Kuwait a "cruel hoax" and urged Iraqis to overthrow their world.

Mr. Bush said the allies will continue to wage war until Iraq agrees to unconditionally withdraw its troops from Kuwait.

"There will be no linkage to other problems in the area," Mr. Bush told reporters.

Mr. Bush was reacting to an announcement Friday by Iraq that it was willing to pull out of Kuwait. However, the statement also linked Iraq's withdrawal with the departure of allied forces from the Gulf and Israeli withdrawal from occupied Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese territories.

"When I first heard that statement I must say I was happy that Saddam Hussein had seemed to realise that he must now withdraw unconditionally from Kuwait in keeping with the relevant United Nations resolutions."

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Soviets hail Iraqi move, await Aziz

Combined agency dispatches

SOVIET LEADERS Friday welcomed Iraq's offer to withdraw from Kuwait, differing sharply with the United States and raising the possibility of a division between the superpowers over ending the Gulf war.

President Mikhail Gorbachev's spokesman, Vitaly Ignatenko, said the "report from Iraq was received with satisfaction and hope in Moscow."

Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh said the offer "opens up a new stage in the development of the conflict," according to the state news agency TASS. He said Soviets expect to get more information about the offer from Iraq's Foreign Minister Aziz, who meets Mr. Gorbachev in Moscow Monday.

The Soviet Union has been at the forefront of efforts to end the Gulf war in recent days, holding meeting with Iraqi, Iranian and Kuwaiti officials in Moscow and the Middle East.

The upbeat Soviet response was the opposite reaction of U.S. President George Bush, who called the Iraqi offer a "cruel hoax."

Soviet officials repeatedly insisted that Iraq fulfill all U.N. resolutions on the crisis. But in meeting with Kuwaiti leaders, Soviet leaders also have expressed

hope for a Palestinian settlement.

Soviet diplomats have tapped decades of cooperation with Arab countries in their recent push to mediate the conflict. The Kremlin in the past has supplied Iraq with fighter jets, Scud missiles and other weapons, and had several hundred military advisers in the country until recently.

Mr. Aziz, is expected in Moscow Sunday. Soviet officials are looking forward to the meeting "with impatience," Mr. Ignatenko said.

Mr. Bessmertnykh said he expected Mr. Aziz to clarify Iraq's offer during the talks. "Most probably, a final conclusion (about the offer) will be made after talks with him," he said.

On the whole, "everything looks rather encouraging," Mr. Bessmertnykh said, according to TASS.

At the Foreign Ministry, Mr. Bessmertnykh met Friday with visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati. Both men said they needed to study Iraq's announcement.

"But this is our hope to bring peace to the region, in (Soviet-Iranian) cooperation together, and also with other countries in the region and all countries involved directly or indirectly,"

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Shamir 'dreams' of Israel from the river to the sea

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER Yitzhak Shamir said Friday he would carry his dream of permanent Israeli control of the occupied West Bank into any post-Gulf war peace talks.

"This is my personal belief and my dream," Mr. Shamir said when asked if he wanted an Israel which swept from the Jordan River.

"But I am committed to negotiate with our Arab neighbours and I will negotiate if they will come to the table," Mr. Shamir told the British

Iraq offers to make peace with just solution

HERE IS the text of the Iraqi communique issued by the Revolutionary Command Council Friday and translated from the Arabic by the Associated Press:

From the moment the United States, and America's allies in the Western colonialist countries realised that there is a force taking shape in a Muslim Arab country, Iraq, a force capable of balancing out the Zionist hegemony supported by imperialism in the region, a free force, honourable and sincerely bent on confronting Zionist aggression and schemes and rejecting imperialist domination of the area, from that moment the United States, Zionism and all the colonialist powers which hate the Arabs and the Muslims, launched a smear campaign against Iraq in order to prevent the emergence and the growth of this power and to isolate, besiege and punish Iraq because it has crossed the border drawn by the United States, Zionism and colonialist powers for the region's countries.

The years 1988 and 1989 witnessed incessant campaigns in the press and the news media, by U.N. officials and colonialist countries in order to pave the way for achieving their malicious objectives.

In 1990, these campaigns escalated feverishly and speedily. The purpose was clear to us and for all true Arabs and Muslims, and for all free people who believe in freedom and justice in the world to return the balance of power in the region to the United States, Zionism and imperialist powers to a situation that had existed for several decades and prevented the Arabs from regaining their rights and the usurped and occupied territories in Palestine, the Golan (Heights) and Lebanon.

It also prevented the realisation of the aspirations of the Arab Nation for renaissance, progress and justice which would have enabled the Arabs to take the natural place they deserve in the world because of their glorious history and great contribution to human civilisation.

During the first months of 1990, these campaigns escalated, expanded and took on a historic nature, with daily exhortations to hit Iraq and liquidate its leadership and deprive it of the means of awakening and progress.

The United States, together with other colonialist countries, took a series of unjust decisions and measures banning the export of anything that might contribute to Iraq's development and its scientific and industrial advancement.

These included actual economic boycott decisions, such as the cancellation of foodstuff contracts during the third month of 1990.

It also became clear that the United States was making preparations in coordination with the Zionist entity to strike at scientific and industrial installations and facilities and liquidate Iraq's nationalist and faithful leadership.

And when the United States realised that its plans, which were largely dependent on Zionist military capabilities, were not adequate to achieve its evil goals, it brought into the conspiracy its agents and lackeys from the corrupt and conspiring rulers, the enemies of God, in the region.

To these it assigned the role of weakening and exhausting Iraq's economy and subsequently bringing Iraq to the brink of economic collapse.

At the same time, the United States embarked on strengthening the network of the colonialist alliance for the purpose of establishing a U.S.-NATO political and military coalition with a view to strike at Iraq and dominate the region, once the opportunity came with the imbalance of power that occurred when the Soviet Union became preoccupied with its own internal affairs.

The events of Aug. 2 were not, in their essence and objective, the way they were portrayed by the American colonialists or as narrated by the traitor followers of

America.

They were a national uprising, patriotic and Islamic, against the conspiracy and the conspirators, an uprising against injustice and degeneration, against corruption and imperialist, Zionist and colonialist hegemony in the region, against the conspirators whose role in the imperialist-Zionist-colonialist plot had been exposed.

For this reason, the imperialist-Zionist-NATO alliance raised the curtain on its true objectives and intentions in the first hours of these events, massing armies and forces, and organising the largest and most tendentious campaign of misleading lies and treachery ever witnessed by the modern world.

This reckless and sly alliance of imperialists, Zionists and NATO recruited the United Nations in order to issue against Iraq, with unprecedented speed, a series of unjust and unprecedented resolutions.

Whereas this organisation had failed over the decades to respond to the simplest of demand by the Arab countries and to safeguard the simplest rights of the Palestinian Arabs, despite the clearness of Arab rights, it failed to respond to the violence of the tragedy endured by the struggling Palestinian people, and which also befall other Arabs, including the aggrieved people of Lebanon.

This reckless alliance imposed its will upon the world and adopted the methods of terror, extortion and bribery, and mobilised all the means of misleading lies that exist in the imperialist-Zionist-colonialist arsenal in order to pave the way for the aggression against Iraq.

O Glorious people of Iraq,
O dear Arabs,
O faithful Muslims.

The aggression launched against Iraq, the brave proud, struggling, faithful and patient country, has no precedent in history.

Human history in its entirety contains no such an alliance in which the United States, two other big powers and a host of other countries, whose number is 30, joined forces against Iraq, the struggling, the brave, the forebearing, whose population does not exceed 18 million.

It is an alliance of the evil, the wanton, the sly and the blasphemous against the fortress of faith and principles, against the centre of freedom and the call for justice and fairness.

For the duration of a whole month, the United States and its allies, including the Zionist entity which participated in the aggression from the beginning, launched brutal and destructive raids against the Iraqi people and against Iraq's scientific, economic, cultural and service facilities, and against religious centres and the locations of Iraq's ancient civilisation.

They unleashed unprecedented amounts of firepower and means of killing and destruction in the name of the United Nations, which they wanted to be a system of American-NATO domination of the world.

The United States and members of the unholy alliance sent their planes, which fire rockets from far away, and their long-range missiles to drop enormous amounts of bombs and explosives on women, children and old people in all Iraqi cities and villages, even the nomadic bedouin in the desert.

They purposefully hit mosques, churches, schools, hospitals and civilian factories. They also hit bridges, highways, and telephone, electricity and water centres, and irrigation dams, cultural centres and cultural monuments in the country.

They hit targets that no bad relation whatsoever to the military effort or the military confrontation that they mentioned. Their latest crime was the ugly and dirty crime of intentionally bombing a civilian shelter that killed and burned hundreds of women, children and old people.

The purpose of this reckless aggression was very clear — the continuation of the process of destruction that they had wanted and in order to punish Iraq, the proud, free and struggling country, because it had chosen the course of freedom, independence and dignity and rejected insults, humiliation and capitulation to the wishes of colonialism and Zionism.

U.N. Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. Should Israel resist, the Security Council is to apply against Israel the same measures applied against Iraq.

3. That all (Iraqi) debts owed to aggressor Gulf and foreign countries by Iraq and the countries that sustained losses because of the aggression without having directly or indirectly participated in the aggression should be forgiven, and that relations be established between the rich and poor countries of the region based on justice and fairness, in a manner that would assign to the rich countries clear commitments to the quest for achieving development in the poor countries and alleviating their economic woes, on the basis of the principle that the poor also have the right to share in the wealth of the rich ones, and that an end be put to double standards in dealing with the problems of the peoples and nations, be they double standards followed by the Security Council or on the part of one country or another.

4. Gulf countries, including Iran, should be left to undertake the necessary security arrangements and regulate relations among themselves, away from any foreign intervention.

5. The proclamation of the Gulf as a region free of foreign military bases and any kind of military intervention, with everybody's commitment to it.

6. That is our word, and we have declared and confirmed it clearly to the world and promulgated it upon the perfidious traitors and their imperialist masters, with our fundamental guarantee, after reliance on God, the One and Only, remaining to be our great Iraqi people and the brave and struggling armed forces, and on those who have faith in the course we are following in the confrontation against injustice and the unjust.

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GET WELL SOON: His Majesty King Hussein and Her Majesty Queen Noor Thursday visited one of the Jordanian drivers injured in the allied air raids on oil tanker trucks transporting crude oil from Baghdad. The injured driver, Majdi Salem Qweider, is undergoing treatment at Al Khalidi Hospital in Amman. The King and Queen also

visited German student Andreas Muesfeldt (photo above) who was attacked by a demonstrator in Amman following Wednesday's allied bombing raid on a Baghdad shelter. The 28-year-old student has been studying Arabic at the University of Jordan.

Germany grants Jordan \$105m

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher ended a five-hour trip to Jordan Thursday afternoon, pledging an aid package of 150 million mark (\$105 million) to Jordan, in part to compensate for the \$2 billion in losses the country suffered from the Gulf crisis.

During meetings with His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Genscher voiced support for Jordan's delicate political and economic situation resulting from the ongoing Gulf war.

"We are interested that Jordan maintains its stability in these difficult circumstances," the German foreign minister told a joint press conference with Crown Prince Hassan.

"Jordan is a stable country and we would like to see it remain as such," Genscher said after announcing that Germany would grant Jordan 150 million marks in addition to the 180 million marks it granted Jordan in late 1990.

The aid was granted to help ease the country's economic difficulties.

Many Jordanians and other Arabs have recently criticised Germany for a 1 billion mark (\$60 million) package of military and economic aid to Israel.

The aid to Israel, German government officials argue, was an attempt to quell Israel's anger against Germany for its role in aiding Iraq.

The German foreign minister stressed that a solution to the region's ills, and a framework for reshaping the post-war relations and infrastructure, "must come from within the region and should not be imposed from outside powers."

The European Community, Genscher said, would contribute to a lasting settlement that would resolve outstanding regional



NEXT MOVE: Seeking a peaceful solution to the Gulf war engages His Majesty King Hussein in an outdoor talk with Germany's foreign minister.

issues like the Palestine problem. Germany had taken it upon itself to aid countries that have suffered economically from Gulf countries, of the so-called frontline states, of Jordan, Syria, Egypt and Turkey, Genscher said.

Genscher visited Egypt and Syria before finishing up his three-country Mideast tour in Amman. Germany also had pledged 190 million mark to aid Egyptian economy.

Genscher said Germany's position on resolving the Gulf crisis has not changed.

"The key to the ending of hostilities in the Gulf would be a withdrawal by Iraqi forces from Kuwait," he said.

"It is in the hands of Saddam Hussein to end this war by withdrawing his troops from Kuwait," he said at the press conference.

Crown Prince Hassan told reporters that Jordan had respected international legitimacy and had adhered to United Nations Security resolutions throughout the crisis. He said Jordan had, in light of the many civilian casualties in Iraq, called on the president of the Security Council to consider calling for a ceasefire.

"It is only through the cessation of hostilities that effectively that political movement can be envisaged," the Crown Prince said. "The longer the fighting continues the more bitter the situation becomes, the more poisoned the atmosphere politically," he added.

Referring to Arab reaction to the killing of civilian Iraqis, Prince Hassan said, "there is no place for it."

The European Community, Genscher said, would contribute to a lasting settlement that would resolve outstanding regional

Canada renews offer to help Jordan obtain energy supplies

AMMAN (J.T.) — Canada on Tuesday said it was prepared to help Jordan find alternative sources of crude oil said that Ottawa understands Jordan's difficult position and the difficulties finding its energy requirements.

Canadian Ambassador Percy Wood met with Energy and Natural Resources Minister Taher Al Taher in Amman to renew mutual cooperation in energy related matters.

Wood offered to help the Jordan find an alternative to crude oil supplies. Jordan has been considering various sources.

A meeting was arranged after Wood last week publicly tested his country's readiness to Jordan meet its oil needs and the country fail to find an alternative source.

Wood was quoted by the News Agency, Petra, as

Habib condoles churches

AMMAN (Petra) — Church leaders received a cable of condolence from Secretary-General of the Middle East Council of Churches, Kibria Habib Thursday. In his cable Habib voiced deep regret over the killing of Jordanian civilians in U.S.-led bombing.

Habib also pledged council support for the Jordanian people in their grief and suffering over the killing of Iraqi civilians.

Habib said he hoped for a peaceful end to the war and said it would pave the way for resolving other regional problems with dialogue.

Habib sent a similar cable to church leaders in Iraq, expressing his deep sorrow over the shelling of hundreds of civilians who died Wednesday in a Baghdad shelter.

"This tragic event is another evidence of the dire need for an immediate ceasefire in the hostilities and for initiating dialogue to achieve a peaceful settlement to the Gulf crisis and other regional problems in the Middle East," the cable said.

saying the Canadian government would help Jordan cover any extra cost of importing crude oil from a more expensive source.

Earlier this week, it was reported that Syria had agreed to sell oil to Jordan to make up for shortfalls from Iraq. The initial purchases would be about 8,000 barrels of diesel a day at international prices. Jordan needs at least 60,000 barrels of oil every month.

A senior official earlier said that Jordan had bought a 100,000 tonne oil tanker for \$7.5 million, and that the vessel was expected to dock at Aqaba before the end of the month.

Jordan was forced to buy oil from Syria and purchase the oil tanker in the face of continued allied raids on Jordanian oil tanker trucks coming from Baghdad.

The air assaults resulted in the death and injury of scores of drivers and other civilians.

Ortega initiative wins positive Iraqi response

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The announcement by Iraq Friday of its readiness to withdraw its forces from Kuwait represents the first phase of an initiative proposed by an international group, according to former Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega.

"We are in fact pleasantly surprised at the quick response that our initiative has drawn from Baghdad," said Mr. Ortega, shortly after addressing a press conference where he announced the initiative of the International Movement for Peace.

"The Iraqi declaration of its willingness to withdraw from Kuwait has come in implementation of our initiative," he said, and referred to a specific part of the initiative, a copy of which was distributed at the press conference.

The document says, "... As a contribution of peace, Iraq announces its acceptance of this proposal for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East. This would imply that, as a first step, Iraq intends to initiate a process of solution to the situation in Kuwait..."

The Iraqi announcement, contained in a statement from the ruling Revolutionary Council (RCC) issued Friday noon, made no direct reference to the initiative unveiled in Amman. But sources close to Mr. Ortega said the plan was carried to Baghdad earlier this week by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and had won approval from Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

"The Iraqi announcement, in fact, uses some of the language we used in our initiative," said one of the sources, referring to a phrase in the Iraqi statement that says Iraq's "readiness (to withdraw from Kuwait) is the first step needed to be implemented as an undertaking on the part of Iraq on the issue of withdrawal, linked with a full and comprehensive ceasefire on land, air and sea and that the U.N. Security Council resolves to withdraw all the resolutions issued by it.

"The RCC indicated that the first step requested from the Iraqi side regarding the issue of withdrawal should also be linked to the

Israel's withdrawal from Palestine and the Arab territories it is occupying in the Golan Heights and Lebanon in implementation of the Security Council and the United Nations."

The Iraqi position that its withdrawal from Kuwait was contingent on the departure from the Gulf of the American-led multinational forces and Israeli pullout from occupied Arab territories is compatible with the initiative announced by Mr. Ortega, who is also calling for a solution to the Cypriot problem.

The former Nicaraguan president, who visited Baghdad at least three times for talks with President Saddam since October, has the support of Jordan, Algeria, Cyprus, Yemen, Libya, Zambia, the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the Holy See in addition to British Labour left-wing leader Tony Benn and Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of Detroit, who read out the initiative at the press conference.

"The Iraqi declaration of its willingness to withdraw from Kuwait has come in implementation of our initiative," he said, and referred to a specific part of the initiative, a copy of which was distributed at the press conference.

The Iraqi position that it did not want this war and was ready to discuss the issue of Kuwait had been made clear to us," Mr. Ortega told the Jordan Times.

"But obviously the American administration did not want peace and hence the deadlock and war," he said.

Latin Bishop of Amman Saleem Al Sayegh told Friday's press conference that Pope John Paul II had endorsed the initiative and had sent a message to the International Movement for Peace expressing his "support and encouragement of all your initiatives to achieve just peace in the Middle East region and to put an end to the war in the Gulf, the massacre of the innocents and the violation of human dignity..."

The initiative, which implied that there was some form of American encouragement, states the U.N. Charter and international legitimacy should be the guidelines to resolve all problems.

At the same time, Mr. Ortega said, "there cannot be any selective application of international law."

The six-point proposal calls on the Security Council to authorise the secretary-general, "in coordination with the government of Iraq," to announce "its readiness

to dispatch U.N. observers to witness the implementation process" of the solution launched with Baghdad's announcement of its intention to withdraw from Kuwait.

"Remaining territorial disputes between Iraq and Kuwait must be settled in accordance with the rules of international law and through mutual agreement (modalities) of dispute settlement," it says.

The initiative envisages the departure of all foreign forces deployed in the Gulf since the Aug. 2 Iraq invasion of Kuwait "as soon as the peace process begins, and... in a time frame not exceeding that of their deployment."

It also calls for an end to all economic sanctions and other punitive measures against Iraq with immediate effect as soon as the process begins and Security Council guarantees that Iraq will not be attacked during or after the process.

It also proposes that the Security Council adopt a resolution demanding immediate implementation of all U.N. resolutions related to the Arab-Israeli conflict and to impose sanctions against the Jewish state if it fails to abide by them. In addition, it calls for measures to protect the Palestinian people living in the occupied territories as well as the Islamic and Christian holy places there.

The fifth point in the proposal calls for convening an international peace conference on the Middle East conflict "in order to establish comprehensive peace and security in the region and enable the Palestinian people to exercise (their) national rights, including the right of return, self-determination and independence on their national and ancestral soil."

The final point is a call for "underlying economic, social, political and security problems of the area, including the need to declare the Middle East area a zone free of mass destruction weapons, to uphold the principle of the rule of law in international relations and the need also to set in motion confidence-building measures that would pave the way for total disarmament."



STAINED: The placard of the American embassy in Amman shows the anger of Jordanians against the U.S. war crimes.

Masses roar at U.S. barbarism

By Serene Halasa and Mariam Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporters

AMMAN — Thousands of Jordanians took to the streets Thursday and Friday to protest the allied bombing of civilian shelters in the Ameria district of Baghdad which reportedly left hundreds of civilians, mostly women and children dead.

The protesters also cheered a young boy who climbed over the arch-like structure in front of the American embassy and stuck two Iraqi flags on it.

There was also a large uproar when news of an Iraqi missile attack on Hafer Al Baten in Saudi Arabia was heard. "Al Hussein missiles struck Saudi Arabia," one protester shouted over a loudspeaker.

Later, protesters staged a sit-in in front of the American embassy until the early hours of the evening. The demonstrators hurled a model of an Al Hussein (Scud) missile over the wall of the embassy. Calling on the Jordanian government to arm the population, protesters chanted "give us guns so that we can give you our souls."

Demands were also made by the demonstrators for a break in diplomatic relations between Jordan and members of the American-led allied coalition.

The women, who were dressed in black, waved Iraqi flags and chanted, "no more allied flags over Jordan's skies."

Often in tears, women shouted at members of the foreign press who stood on the sidelines: "... We hope he gets back at all of you and Fahd, Mubarak and Al Assad," said one woman referring to possible retaliation by Saddam Hussein at allied powers.

Insults and curses were hurled at the American and Egyptian embassies at the Third Circle. "Our demands are legitimate. All we need is Arab national unity," chanted the women as they condemned Arab members of the allied coalition against Iraq.

Meanwhile, thousands of students from Al Watani and Orthodox schools marched to the United Nations headquarters in central Amman to protest tests there. American flags were burned and "wanted" posters of American president George Bush were raised "wanted for the execution of Iraqi children — dead or dead" read one placard.

The protesters, who were later joined by men, clapped and cheered when a protester reached

U.S. massacre of Iraqis draws fire from senators

AMMAN (J.T.) — The allied raid on a civilian shelter in Baghdad dominated a session in the Upper House of Parliament Thursday which was chaired by Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi.

Speakers at the session unanimously condemned the continued allied aggression on Iraq in general but singled out Wednesday's raid on the shelter.

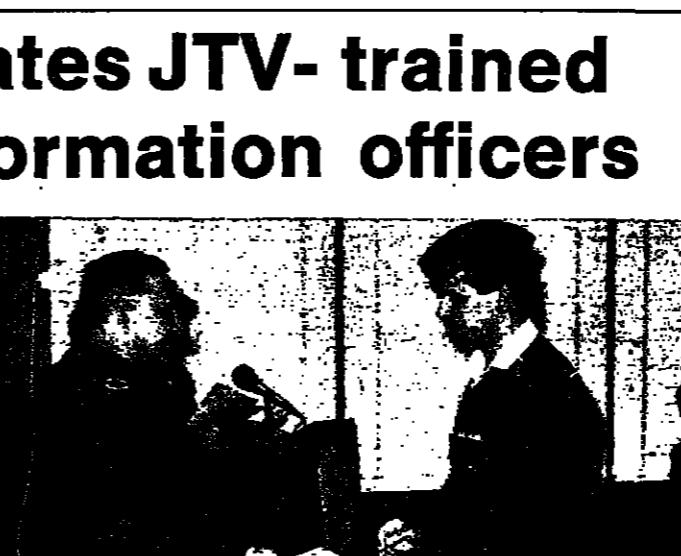
Hosni Ayesh compared the raid with the massacres committed by U.S. agents in Lebanon

and Palestine and with the massacres of Palestinians at Sabra and Shatila after the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

Kamel Sharif described the attack as the most brutal and the ugliest crime committed by the U.S. on the Arab people.

Wednesday's massacre, he said, clearly reflects the new world order sought by American President George Bush.

Among the other parliament speakers who poured scorn on



MABROUK: PSD Director-General Fadel Ali hands an officer a diploma of graduation.

attacked by the local population, Fadel Ali said although the attack on the truck was motivated by the allied air raids on Jordanian vehicles, no one has the right to take the law into his own hands.

Jordanians, he added should abide by laws and regulations; and citizens should differentiate between national patriotic feelings and chaos and disorder.

There was no justification whatsoever for the attack on the trucks in Ramtha since by their action those involved overlooked and ignored the Jordanian government's role, something which violates the democratic way of life in Jordan, Fadel Ali noted.

Holy war is normally organised and can only be waged at proper and most convenient time and place but not through infiltrations that are bound to fail, Ali said.

With reference to the recent incidents in Ramtha where Turkish and Syrian trucks were

considered as one of the strongest in the Arab area, and its

Iranians tour military sites

Algerian, Yemeni parliamentarians join in efforts to stop war

AMMAN (J.T.) — The speakers of the Algerian and Yemeni parliaments, Abd Al Aziz Bel Khadem and Yousef Al Shahar are holding talks in Amman with Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament, Abdul Latif Arabyat and other Jordanian deputies.

The two visitors arrived in Amman Thursday and said the meetings would include discussions of the Gulf war and continuing allied bombing of Iraq. Upon their arrival, Khadem and Shahar said their countries would join Jordan's efforts to stop the war.

The Yemeni and Algerian parliamentarians condemned the recent allied raids on Iraqi civilians and paid tribute to Iraq for its steadfastness.

The two parliamentarians have scheduled further talks here Saturday.

The speaker of the Lower House of Parliament, Arabyat, earlier met here with members of the visiting Iranian parliamentary delegation to review the situation in the Gulf and to discuss Jordanian-Iranian parliamentary cooperation to end the war.

Arabyat was quoted saying the U.S.-led coalition's continued aggression on Iraq is designed to

destroy the Arab and Islamic Nation.

The Jordanian people realise the dimension of this criminal plot and have adopted a clear and firm stand to protect their interests and those of the Arab and Islamic nations, Arabyat said.

The head of the Iranian delegation, Mohammad Salami, said the Iranian visit was a prelude to joint Jordanian-Iranian cooperation.

Salami said a message delivered to Arabyat contained the Iranian five-point peace plan, initiated by Iran's parliament Speaker Mehdi Karroubi.

Following the meeting in parliament, the Iranian delegation members visited the front line positions of the Fourth Royal Mechanised Division in the Jordan Valley. They also met with senior officers and troops for a military briefing.

The delegation members toured military positions at Karamah and recited verses of the Holy Koran at the Martyrs Monument near the site of the Karamah battle.

The delegation members were accompanied on the tour by parliament deputies representing the Islamic Movement.

By Kamel S. Abu Jaber

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View from Amman

Latter day hordes

THE Crusades commenced in 1095 with a speech calling the Arabs both Muslim and Christian, a "wicked race." The use and abuse of the symbols of the gentle Christian faith, neither then nor ever could hide the ugly intentions of the West trying to colonise the Arab East. Lasting for nearly two hundred years of successive military incursions, the Crusades remain a major cause for much of the destruction and decline of the glorious Arabo-Islamic civilisation: A decline that survived with us, in one form or another till modern times psychologically as well as physically. It set the negative tone between the Arabs and the West, that was to be further exploited and expanded upon by modern Zionism creating an atmosphere of mutual suspicion and even hatred. The Crusades left the Arab World so weak that it lay almost helpless before the next barbaric invasion of the Mongolian hordes of Genghis Khan and his grandson Hulaku.

After brave resistance by the last Abbaside Caliph, Hulaku finally entered Baghdad in February 1258: exactly seven hundred and thirty three years ago. What followed stands as stark reminder of what is taking place in Baghdad today. The city was pillaged, its schools and libraries burned, its mosques and buildings destroyed and nearly a million souls massacred. Not until the stench of the dead became too horrible did the Mongol hordes finally leave. Then the Mongol leader sent this warning message to Cairo: "...it is for you to fly and for us to pursue, but whether will you flee, and by what road will you escape us? Our horses are swift, our arrows sharp, our swords like thunderbolts, our hearts as hard as the mountains..."

After almost fifty thousand raids on Iraq, President George Bush, leader of today's Western hordes against Iraq says on Thursday, Feb. 2, 1991, "I know what I've got to do, I've got very good people helping me do it. I don't really lose sleep..." On Feb. 13, 1991 the allied forces bombed an air raid shelter in Baghdad in which hundreds of women and children were killed; their charred

and mutilated bodies leaving no stench. It is culturally acceptable to the Arabs to separate men and women even in times of war. The brutal and indiscriminate smiting by the Zionised West designed to break the back of Iraq to Israel's benefit and its future hegemony over the area, will one day dawn on Cairo, Damascus and other Arab capitals. They are next on the hit list.

At dinner at a friend's house I met with several journalists and media men from the West. That these media men harbour no sympathy for Iraq or its deliberate destruction, even its human heritage of antiquities and culture, did not shock me as much as their cold blooded attitude towards human suffering. One of them said of Egypt in a matter of fact attitude that, "...it is too poor, problem-ridden and hopeless to pose any challenge to anyone in the future. Besides we can starve it whenever we want..." Syria, said another of these enlightened fiercely civilised men "...is next on the list after Iraq... you do not think it will be left alone?" At this point a Jordanian guest started reminding them of international law, the Geneva Conventions and related matters dealing with the wanton destruction of civilian areas. A third "civilised" guest off handedly and almost rudely cut him off saying "...we know all about morality and principles; you know they have no place in this matter... let us talk about what will happen..." To be sure this was a most unusual group at my table not representative of the entire opinion or even sympathies of Western media many of whom are dismayed and horrified at what is taking place. I was struck at the coincidence of meeting four persons of such similar views in one place. The conversation left me with a heavy heart. Western culture is a "culture of violence" where there lingers the thought that only violence can solve anything. Of the sustained and the exceedingly heavy fire power dumped on Iraq another gentleman blithely replied "...we really could thank the Iraqis... not only are we trying on them new weapons, we are also getting rid of obsolete bombs which otherwise we would have to maintain at some expense... besides we still have not used napalm..."

On Feb. 13, 1991 British war minister Mr. Tom King said that the bombing of Baghdad is conducted with great precision. He denied that the 60 or so Jordanians, and the similar number of foreigners killed on the Amman-Baghdad highway on the same day were killed by British raiders. Someone else did it.

I myself have spent my whole life trying to effect a reconciliation between the Arabs and the West. As I look back on the last decade, and in spite of a certain acrimonious atmosphere and strained relations between this or that Arab or Western state, I was beginning to believe that relations were on the portal of normalisation. The Arab state system was — I thought — maturing and a healthy debate was developing towards democratisation and liberalisation.

Somehow the culture of violence seems to continue to produce men who think that the Arabs are inhuman creatures who appear to be located in the world without really being part of it. Zionism has distorted not only Western culture to its advantage but to that culture's ultimate disadvantage as well. Zionism took the heart, the spirit of love and mercy, that Western culture may once have had, and what is left is no more than the oblique and murky image filtered through its lens. We hope that there is some place where this is not so totally supreme. The brutalisation of the Arabs now in current vogue is beyond belief. What shall we cling to in these odd and unpredictable times? Shall we start a Save the Arabs Fund in as much as we are an endangered species? It is indeed an unjust war.

The West prides itself on being rational, perhaps. But it is a heartless rationality remotely controlled by an ancient cult built on the myth of a vengeful God leading a chosen people. No one should underestimate the power of myth over rationality. A predator attacks what it thinks it sees. One wonders what the West thinks it sees in U.S. when will the hunting season on the Arab/Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq by the Zionised West come to an end? Even the U.N. has allowed itself to become an instrument of violence against us.

Bush derails peace

IT WAS a breakthrough followed by an anti-climax, a genuine peace offer met with cynical rejection and hasty dismissal.

The Iraqi initiative of Feb. 15, 1991 materialised to give peace a chance, as a way to end the terrible war in the Gulf. It came in response to international pleas to stop the bloodshed and the massive destruction, to meet half-way those who were extending a sincere hand to peace with justice and honour.

Unfortunately, the U.S. president had apparently grown so accustomed to the thunder of guns and got used to the sound and sight of violence that he saw in the Iraqi offer no more than a "cruel hoax" and an opportunity to call on the Iraqi people and military to take matters into their own hand and remove their government from power.

President Saddam Hussein and his colleagues in the revolutionary council had waited all this time to make their intentions on Kuwait clear, it seems, because a) they might have thought they would be getting the same response from the U.S. if they had earlier announced, in so many words, their intention to leave the emirate b) they might have wanted to prove the point that it was not threats and intimidation which could have brought them to their knees, that they were not afraid of fighting the Americans and their allies for what Iraq believes in and upholds, and that four weeks into this pointless war Baghdad was more willing than ever before to allow reason to prevail and peaceful solutions to take their course.

Tragically, though, the message was again lost on the U.S. president, or rather totally ignored by him, as it is common knowledge now that what Bush has always wanted appears to be nothing less than Iraq's destruction and subjugation.

The war that America is waging against Iraq, we all recall, was launched in the name of "liberating Kuwait." We, in Jordan at least, had seen behind the war some objectives that went beyond Kuwait's liberation, and many of us did not hesitate to say what we actually thought. Those sceptics who did not believe us must now have the evidence in the U.S. president's reaction to Iraq's offer: The man is intent on taking his grudge against Saddam Hussein to the very bitter end; he is ready to fight to the last Iraqi or American or whoever will take part in his crusade.

This is, perhaps, where true statesmen and peace-loving nations and individuals have to come in: To instil some sense and reasonableness into Bush's arrogant mind. The onus is on those countries of the coalition whose boys the American president wants to sacrifice in the name of ignoble aims, like overthrowing the government of a sovereign state and destroying that nation's capabilities and infrastructure at whatever cost to the victim and aggressor. All responsibility does not lie with members of the coalition, however. The Soviet Union and China, the Non-Aligned Movement, the U.N. and peace movements throughout the world have to throw their weight and support behind the new momentum that was created by the Iraqi initiative. Their efforts should not be derailed by the negative and dangerous reaction to Baghdad's genuine peace offer by George Bush. It is, after all, the intention of the U.S. president not to give peace a chance. His is the cruel hoax, not Saddam's.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE UNITED Nations Organisation has committed the gravest blunder in its history by allowing the Security Council to pass resolution 678 which is being used now as a pretext to continue acts of aggression on Iraq, said Al Ra'i daily Friday. Indeed, that resolution has enabled the Americans and their allies to commit the massacres by shelling and bombing civilian shelters in Baghdad and destroying churches, mosques and cultural and economic centres in Iraqi cities, the paper noted. As if the criminal Americans and their allies were not satisfied with their latest crime in Baghdad, they sent in their war planes to raid civilian buses carrying Jordanians from Kuwait and Iraq and other vehicles transporting Sudanese nationals from Iraq to Jordan, the paper noted. The Security Council resolution was a crime in itself, giving a free hand to the criminals to maintain their organised acts of terror against the civilians and against human civilisation, the paper continued. Should the acts of aggression on Iraq continue, the paper added, the situation is bound to get out of hand; and nobody can predict the consequences of developments that might ensue later on. The paper said that it is incumbent upon the international community to move fast and put an end to the ongoing criminal actions of the allied forces and end the Gulf war which has already caused untold human sufferings.

The allied forces' massacring of 600 women and children hiding from air raids in a shelter in Baghdad came fast on the heels of a visit to the Arabian Peninsula by the American Defence Secretary Dick Cheney, says Fahed Al Fanek Friday. It seems that a decision has been taken by the White House to strike at civilian targets in intensity, now that the allied forces have completely failed to destroy Iraq's military might, says the writer in his column. Washington's insistence in carrying out further acts of criminal actions and pursuing the killing of civilians is underlined by the fact that the U.S. administration did not apologise for the death of the 600 innocent civilians of Iraq, notes the writer. He says instead, the U.S. administration and the allied forces command insisted that they had raided the shelter deliberately, considering it as a legitimate target for the military forces. By describing the American military as barbarians and Nazis is indeed an insult to the barbarians and the Nazis because America's crimes far outdo those ever committed by any other criminals in the world's history, Fanek adds. This brutal action committed by the American-led forces against the innocent civilians Fanek adds is a crime lying heavily on the minds of the heads of state of the United States, Britain, and France as well as Hosni Mubarak and the oil sheikhs of the Arabian Peninsula.

Gulf war fuels anti-U.S. views in Turkey

By Elm Kaben
Reuter

ISTANBUL — "O believers, O brother," blares the voice of a popular religious leader outside Istanbul's Blue Mosque. "Our people have been bitterly betrayed."

Bearded worshippers emerging from Friday prayers walk past the pedlar playing a cassette of Timur's Hoca at top volume.

"Our country is being made the slave of America," Hoca cries as black-clad women follow the man into the street.

Soon the crowd starts roaring "Down with the United States," "Saddam is an excuse, Islam is the target" and "Allahu Akbar (God is Great.)"

The scene is typical of protests in secular, but mainly Muslim, Turkey since the Gulf war stirred anti-American fury among the country's growing fundamentalist minority.

"The Muslims are discovering the mosque, discovering that it is a place for meeting," said Abdurrahman Dilipak, a writer for the religious daily Mili Gazette.

"The war is a plot against Islam. Saddam was wrong to invade Kuwait — but against America, I would defend him to the end."

Muslim militants in Turkey are more comfortable denouncing the United States than praising Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, whose calls for jihad, or holy war, against America and its allies are seen here as sitting strangely with his own Baath Party's secular stance.

For Dilipak, president Turgut Ozal's decision to let U.S. bombers pound Iraq from a Turkish base indicates the role Washington would like Turkey to play in the Middle East.

"America wants to keep Turkey as a policeman wielding stick and carrot on the Arabs. Islam is now the biggest threat to America, which wants the oil which is in Muslim hands," he said.

The Islamic fundamentalists

are among a majority of Turks who, opinion polls show, oppose Ankara's part in the Gulf war. "No to war" is a popular slogan across the political spectrum.

But the protests by Muslim militants, in which one person has died, alarm Turks loyal to the nation's secular traditions.

"The ruling (Motherland) Party is providing opportunities to those who want theocracy in this country. This is a big mistake," Erdal Inonu, head of the main opposition Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP), warned this month.

Islamic fundamentalists have enjoyed greater freedom since military rule ended in 1983. A senior security official said last year they had infiltrated government ministries and the police.

Turkey (population: 57 million) has 62,000 mosques and about 1,500 new ones are being built every year, officials say. More than 2,000 Koranic schools have opened in the past decade and sales of Islamic cassettes and literature are flourishing.

The budget of the state religious affairs office has risen faster than that of all other ministries in the last two years.

"Fundamentalism does not pose an immediate threat today but it is expanding, gradually gaining power," said Sami Kohen, communist with the liberal daily Milliyet.

"We all know how it paved its way in other Muslim states like Algeria. It starts slowly, but then settles for sure and it's too late to go back," added Kohen.

Ozal, himself a devout Muslim, takes pride in the progress Turkey has made towards a free-market economy in the past decade and sees it as a bridge between the West and the Islamic world.

He began his political career as a fundamentalist party candidate in the late 1970s, has performed the pilgrimage to Mecca three times and regularly attends Friday prayers.

His elder brother Korkut has

ties with Saudi Arabia, which finances Islamic banks and cultural organisations in Turkey.

Turkey, whose secular foundations were laid by President Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in the 1920s and 30s, hardly seems ripe for an Islamic revolution such as that underway by neighbouring Iran in 1979.

"There are fanatics, radical extremists all around the world and we too have a few," Ekmecidin Ihsanoglu, state-appointed director of Istanbul's Centre for Islamic Culture, told Reuters.

"But" Turkey has been in transformation since Ottoman times and has got somewhere. It's impossible to think of a reversal ... Islamic fundamentalists are a marginalised minority," he said. "Nobody can claim that the Gulf war is linked to religion."

Hayrettin Karahan, a doctor of theology at Istanbul University, said it was better to tolerate fundamentalists than to suppress them in a country oriented towards the West since the 1950s.

"I believe increased freedoms for Islamic fundamentalists help them come up to the surface. This is healthy. It is better than having them live underground, away from people's notice."

Most of Turkey's Muslims are Sunnis, a branch of Islam historically at least sympathetic to religious dominance of the state than Shiites, who form the majority in Iran.

However, anti-western feeling seems likely to grow the longer the Desert Storm assault on Iraq continues.

The Gulf war is a crusade against Islam. We do not approve of Turkey's policies," said Ahmet Gul, 42, outside Istanbul's big Beyazit mosque.

"Only God is faultless. If there are mistakes, they should be corrected. But Muslims should not fight Muslims," said Gul, who wore a skull-cap and twisted a worry bead.

Beside him his wife, swathed in black from head to toe, began to speak but Gul swiftly interrupted. "She thinks like me," he said.

Planning Mideast regional order?

By Alan Elsner
Reuter

WASHINGTON — The Gulf war has yet to reach its most decisive phase but already nations are jockeying for advantage in the diplomatic battle to reshape the Middle East after the fighting ends.

Recent diplomatic moves by the Soviet Union, Iran, Israel, Egypt and others have served as notice of those countries' intentions to play a major role in whatever political processes emerge from the war.

The biggest player of all is certain to be the United States, which created the international coalition to oppose Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and contributed the bulk of the military muscle now unleashed against Iraq.

The most revealing glimpse so far of Washington's thinking came last week in testimony to Congress by Secretary of State James Baker. He laid out four main aims of future U.S. diplomacy — achieving greater Gulf security, regional arms control, economic reconstruction and Arab-Israeli peace.

But Baker said it was premature to set forth a detailed blueprint, noting that the way the war ended would greatly influence the situation.

For instance, if President Saddam retains power, ambitious economic reconstruction plans for Iraq would be put on hold and the coalition might find it necessary to maintain substantial forces in the Gulf and keep some economic sanctions in place.

Arms control, already certain to be a touchy subject between Israel, which fears growing Arab missile and chemical weapons capabilities, and Arab states, which fear Israel's advanced nuclear weapons.

If Baker's four points, most attention will likely be focused on the fourth — achieving Arab-Israeli peace and solving the Palestinian issue.

The United States and its allies

must tackle the problem of facing the charge of applying one moral standard for the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and another for the occupation of Arab lands.

But there is no support in Israel for dialogue with Palestine, who have supported Saddam's war against Israel.

Egypt has been discussing a Middle East peace conference with Syria, the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and the European Community.

Israel, which rejects the idea of an international conference, has its own ideas of trying to reach peace first with Arab states and tackling the more difficult Palestinian problem later.

Baker in his testimony acknowledged that the crisis had "stirred emotions among Palestinians and Israelis that will not yield easily to reconciliation."

He now seems to be thinking of a twin-track diplomatic process, working both with Arab states and moderate Palestinians — if any acceptable to Israel can be found.

Martin Indyk, director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, believes the United States will seek Soviet support in sponsoring a dialogue between Israel and Syria as a central point in postwar diplomacy.

But the Soviet Union, its foreign policy now more influenced by harder line elements, might have its own ideas. By sending an envoy to Baghdad, Moscow seems to be signalling a determination to rebuild its relations with its former ally Iraq after the war.

Iran too wants to be involved in shaping the postwar order. Its main interest is to reduce or eliminate the U.S. military presence and reduce its political sway in the region.

LETTERS

Dim chances

To the Editor:

On the background of the unjust war being waged against the people of Iraq, the killing and the destruction, can one continue to adhere to the "optimistic" and philosophical world opinion? The latter view represents the human condition as being continually pervaded by the values of truth and justice.

Indeed as we believe — in the context of Arab-Islamic culture — truth and just causes are inexorably vindicated, however unfavourable the odds, one ought not be daunted by the Voltairean satire of Dr. Pangloss forever affirming that this is the "best of possible worlds," no matter disastrous the outcome of

Gulf war stretches Muslim Djiboutis' French allegiances

By Aldan Hartley
Reuter

DJIBOUTI — The tough-looking foreign legionnaire, machine gun in hand, holds open the door of a school bus and gently delivers French children to their home.

Squatting beneath some nearby trees, a group of Djiboutians looks on impassively, their mouths full of qat — a narcotic that inspires lassitude.

In the distance, a mosque calls the faithful to prayer.

There are some 4,000 French troops and 7,000 French civilians based in the strategic port of Djibouti, capital of the tiny republic of the same name on the Bab El Mandeb straits of the Red Sea.

"Our job is to protect the country and my forces against terrorist attacks or attacks on the sea," said General Claude Gautier, commander of the French forces in Djibouti, a former French territory.

Western diplomats dismiss a rumour that Iraqi aircraft have bases in Yemen, just 30 kilometres away across the Red Sea, but say the government might as well be a pretext to give French forces wider powers.

President Hassan Gouled Apti-

don has openly backed the U.S.-led alliance against Iraq, but the defence pact signed at the country's independence in 1977 does not allow French forces to launch a military attack from Djibouti.

Even if Djibouti's airbase, port or military hospital are not used directly, the city expects to play host to thousands of allied troops on leave from the Gulf.

But as the world in the Muslim world, the Djibouti government's support for the coalition fighting Iraq appears to stand in contrast to popular sentiments among the half-million population.

Demonstrations against the Gulf war were banned on Jan. 20 after six people were injured in a struggle with the police.

"Since the war started, feelings at the grassroots level have swung in favour of Saddam Hussein and against the French and Americans here," one young Djiboutian said.

On Thursday (Jan. 24) the government charged a number of people in connection with an alleged coup plot which it said originated among the Afars, Djibouti's second-biggest ethnic group after the Issas (Somalis).

Without the French, this nation could not survive in the politically

volatile Horn of Africa.

Ethiopia and Somalia both looked jealously on Djibouti at independence but Djibouti sought military protection from France as the former colonial power.

Legend says that when the French arrived in 1856, they found little more than a sickly goat under a withered thorn tree.

Today, in with the best port facilities in Africa north of South Africa's Durban, Djibouti is a transit point for shipping to French territories in the Indian Ocean and hosts a military airbase.

But being so near the Gulf and the mouth of the Red Sea has raised the question of what role it will play in the war against Iraq.

Many ordinary Djiboutians feel their mainly Muslim country has become a "backyard" for French and allied military operations in the Gulf war.

It is a charge Foreign Minister Mounim Bahadon Farah is at pains to deny.

"If we have accepted to give facilities to multinational forces, it only means we have made an independent decision to oppose the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait," he says.

General Gautier said his forces could help troops in transit to the Gulf, and provide training in the desert.

In September last year, after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, a grenade attack in the port's red light district killed a French boy and injured 17 other people.

A pro-Iraqi group calling itself the "Movement for Djibouti Youth" claimed responsibility for the bombing and promised to kill more French, English and Americans. But no further attacks on foreigners have occurred.

In the Saigon bar shaven-headed legionnaires, their tattooed arms around the shoulders of Ethiopian prostitutes, are served cocktails by Vietnamese waitresses.

From the historic Hamoudi Mosque a few street away, staunch local Muslims view the fleshpots with moral outrage.

But in return for hosting the French and allied forces Djibouti's government hopes for economic rewards, diplomats say.

"The first feelings of recession here came in 1990 when the poverty of Ethiopia and war in Somalia began to starve our trade," said Boub Houssein Omar, a senior commerce official.

Egyptian public uneasy with Kuwaitis' recklessness

By Ashraf Fouad
Reuter

Thank God the majority has risen to the level of the tragedy we are passing through," Kandari said in an interview.

The Egyptian government has warmly welcomed the exiles. State television often carries patriotic Kuwaiti music and broadcasts encouraging solidarity with occupied Kuwait at prime time.

But the arrogance among some of the wealthy exiles, reflected in offhand comments widely circulating in Cairo, has irritated Egyptians.

"You (Egyptian soldiers) are not in the Gulf for free, we pay every man," is one of many remarks attributed to Kuwaitis by angry Egyptians.

Many Kuwaitis in Egypt, one of the poorer Arab states, live in luxury hotels and apartments while they wait for allied forces to liberate their emirate.

Kuwaitis once enjoyed one of the world's highest per capita incomes. At the time of the invasion their government controlled some \$100 billion in foreign investments. It has contributed about \$18.5 billion to the multinational troops.

"They are arrogant and will treat us even worse once they return home," said Magdy,

Kuwaitis in Egypt and stop them from "harming our reputation and cause."

Hatem, like some Egyptian landlords, felt sorry for Kuwaitis made homeless by Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion and offered one family a free furnished flat.

He said he evicted them after overhearing his Kuwaiti tenant tell a friend on the telephone: "By God, we have lived to see the day when (Egyptian) beggars give us refuge."

President Hosni Mubarak has stressed that Egypt's stand in the Gulf crisis was one of principle not dictated by financial needs or promises of aid.

Diplomats said Kuwait's exiled rulers have granted Egypt some \$50 million to help Egyptians fleeing Kuwait and promised to make up for lost longings and Egyptian accounts in Kuwaiti banks once the emirate was liberated.

There were about 230,000 Egyptians in Kuwait and many have collected \$400 in immediate Kuwaiti aid while others flock to the embassy in Cairo every day to sign up to return to the emirate to participate in its reconstruction.

Jordan

(Continued from page 1)

too." But the minister added that the conditions show that "there has to be more elaboration."

"This is what a ceasefire means," he added. The Iraqi president "laid down his thinking and there has to be more discussion."

Mr. Izzeddine said that Jordan viewed the initiative in three major contexts. "We welcome it, we call on all countries to react positively and we see it as an opening for peace."

Mr. Massi said that the Iraq move should be capitalised on particularly by the United Nations Security Council members. He said the initiative, voiced Iraq's readiness to cooperate in implementing Resolution 660, which calls for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait," in a serious effort to achieve an acceptable, honorable and political solution."

The foreign minister stressed the major role the European countries can play in reaching a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis and called for prompt actions to arrange a ceasefire in preparation for peace based on dialogue.

Mr. Massi placed special emphasis on the scheduled meeting between Iraqi Foreign Minister Tareq Aziz and Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh on Sunday. He said the U.S.-Soviet statement on Jan. 30 could serve as a good basis for the talks between the two ministers.

He noted that the Iraqi statement was in harmony with the diplomatic efforts being made by many parties, particularly the Non-Aligned Movement, and other countries, which called for applying the same standards when implementing international legitimacy.

Shamir

(Continued from page 1)

beginning to understand that he is in bad shape," Arens told Israeli

Television.

Asked if Israel feared Iraq may survive with its military might in tact, Mr. Arens said: "I don't think that at the end of this war, Iraq will have the same war machine it had at the start."

Mr. Arens also said Israel, which has been attacked 12 times by Iraqi Scud missiles, would maintain its vigilance.

He declined to discuss the specifics of Iraq's offer until Israeli officials had time to study the text.

Mr. Arens also criticised State Department spokeswoman Margaret Turwiler for announcing that the last Iraqi missile attack struck his neighbourhood.

Mr. Arens was in a meeting with Secretary of State James Baker during Tuesday's missile attack. He left the room to call his wife.

Ms. Turwiler later told reporters the missile had hit Mr. Arens' neighbourhood.

"I must say that I am sorry that the State Department spokeswoman reported this to the press," Mr. Arens told Israeli Television. "It was heard all over the world, including Baghdad, and she shouldn't have done this."

He added that it threatened his security and that of Israel. Military censors have banned publication of the location of missile hits, saying it could help Iraq aim its Scuds.

Bush

(Continued from page 1)

and that the war will continue until there is an unconditional withdrawal.

At the U.S. Defense Department, a senior analyst said there was no evidence that Iraq's army was pulling back.

"We have seen no indication of any kind of Iraqi withdrawal," said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said U.S. officials

felt "disappointment" that Iraq is again trying to raise the hopes of its own people and others around the world, with no willingness to back it up. There's no concrete actions in here. There's really nothing to lead us to believe (Iraq) is going to pull out of Kuwait."

The call marked a dramatic departure from Mr. Bush's remarks throughout the crisis. White House officials said the call reflected "growing frustration" with Iraq's refusal to bow to round-the-clock allied bombing and leave Kuwait.

The call also echoed remarks Mr. Bush made in his showdown with Panama's强人Manuel Antonio Noriega. In that case, Mr. Bush urged a military coup and then sent U.S. troops into Panama in December 1989 and had Mr. Noriega arrested and brought back to the United States to face drug-trafficking charges.

The White House has repeatedly stated that the removal of President Saddam was not one of the official aims of the 28-nation Western-Arab coalition fighting Iraq.

Mr. Bush said the massive allied offensive against Iraqi military targets would continue, and spokesman Fitzwater said the Baghdad peace plan may have been offered as a delaying tactic.

"There's no change in the military conflict and there's not been any different instructions given to our military," Mr. Fitzwater told reporters.

There has been speculation that the massive air war that has gone on for more than four weeks now may change to a ground offensive soon.

Mr. Bush earlier in the week said he decided to continue the bombing missions "for a while" but preparations have been going ahead for a ground war.

Gulf

(Continued from page 1)

Jewish state the same sanctions it applied against Iraq.

Shortly after the RCC state-

ment was read over the radio, Baghdad residents fired their rifles and pistols in the air, in a traditional sign of celebration.

The RCC statement said: "In order to achieve a dignified and acceptable political settlement, the Revolutionary Command Council has decided to accept U.N. Security Council Resolution 660 of 1990, including the clause related to Iraqi withdrawal."

It said: "The willingness on the part of Iraq should be regarded as a guarantee from Iraq (that it will withdraw) and coupled with an immediate and comprehensive cessation of all land, air and sea military operations.

But government officials, although expressing a new tone of hope, said it would be premature to conclude that the war would end soon. They noted that the RCC had coupled the withdrawal offer with numerous other proposals which might be unacceptable to the allies and to Israel.

Officials who spoke with reporters gave no indication of the degree to which Iraq would link its withdrawal to the other conditions.

The RCC statement urged a new Arab and world order under which wealthy states would help the development of poor nations.

As well as an end to sanctions, it demanded an end to "all the negative measures taken by some of the states against Iraq individually and collectively before Aug. 2nd, which were the real cause, so that matters return to their normal nature, as though all this has not happened and without this bringing Iraq any negative effects for any reason."

Before the invasion, Iraq accused Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates of economic sabotage against it by flooding the world market with cheap oil. It said Kuwait was stealing oil from the Rumailah oilfield straddling their border.

The statement called for the Gulf to be a zone free of military bases and any foreign troops. It ended on a defiant note:

"The Gulf is to be a zone free of military bases and any foreign troops. It ended on a defiant note:

Arabs

(Continued from page 1)

Egyptian minister said: "Our preoccupation with the Iraqi aggression will not make us forget our historic obligations to the Palestinian cause."

Egyptian sources said the conference has two working papers on the table, one from the GCC nations and one drafted by Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria.

The Saudi, Egyptian and Syrian foreign ministers have met periodically since November to force closer ties.

The sources said conferees meeting in secret, were pondering scenarios of how militarily strong members of the anti-Iraq front like Egypt and Syria can help the wealthy Gulf states in return for their bounty in terms of development funds.

Egypt's 38,500 troops and Syria's 19,000 men in Saudi Arabia may well serve as the nucleus of an Arab force to defend the region along with GCC armies.

Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi said Friday that Baghdad must guarantee Kuwait's freedom after withdrawal and that the U.S.-led military strikes now have no justification, the official Libyan news agency JANA reported.

JANA said that Col. Qaddafi in comments to the agency said that he welcomed "any peaceful initiative and I feel happy that the efforts of Libya for persuading Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait succeeded... but Iraq has a right not to be in a hurry until it gets assured that Kuwait will never be handed to the U.S. or other quarter."

Col. Qaddafi was further quoted as saying: "We should be assured of the independence and freedom of the U.N. resolution, we cannot accept that it gets released from occupation to another occupation."

Tunisia's ambassador to France said he believed Iraq's offer was serious and Baghdad had accepted the principle of withdrawal.

Council

(Continued from page 1)

"The United States is trying to annihilate Iraq through intensive, comprehensive high-altitude bombing," Abdul Amir Al Anbari said after his speech which listeners said was laced with references to "hegemonic" activities of the United States and to a "Zionist conspiracy."

Iraq is ready to fight on if the U.S.-led coalition spurns its stated willingness to negotiate a withdrawal from Kuwait, Iraq's ambassador to France said Friday.

"If the answer to this Iraqi offer is going to be negative, that proves to the world that what is happening (in the war) is not (about) Kuwait, but the destruction of Iraq and the reshaping of the Middle East altogether," Ambassador Abdul Razak Al Hashemi said in a U.S. television interview.

Speaking from Paris by telephone on NBC's Today show, he added: "If the United States and so-called coalition still want to go ahead with this madness, Iraq is ready for it."

Indian Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar urged the United States and its allies to respond with an immediate ceasefire. Simultaneously, Iraq should announce a timetable for withdrawal, he said.

Pakistan welcomed Iraq's offer.

Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Mohammad Khan said Iraq's offer was a "good sign" but said Pakistan was waiting for details of the Iraqi statement.

"It is a positive development anyway. We welcome it. If they (Iraqis) are prepared to implement the U.N. resolution, it is definitely a positive development," he said.

Tunisia's ambassador to France said he believed Iraq's offer was serious and Baghdad had accepted the principle of withdrawal.

"I am very happy to hear of this overture. I think this is a serious overture which should be seized and not allowed to go to waste," Ambassador Ibrahim Turki told French Radio.

He said the conditions in which Iraq's leadership had expressed its willingness to implement Re-

solution 660, which calls for its withdrawal from Kuwait, should not serve as a pretext to reject the offer.

"These issues must absolutely not be allowed to compromise the basic problem — the principle of retreat — which has been accepted," he said.

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Lendl, Sampras move to Philadelphia quarterfinals

PHILADELPHIA (R) — Ivan Lendl and Pete Sampras struggled with formidable opponents in their third round matches before reaching the quarterfinals at the \$1-million U.S. Professional Indoor Men's Tennis Tournament.

The top seeded Lendl took charge in the second set to beat 15th seeded Gary Muller 7-6 (7-5) 6-3, and the second seeded Sampras eliminated a spunky Malvai Washington 6-3, 7-6 (7-5).

Sampras, the reigning U.S. Open champion is making his first appearance of the 1991 season in Philadelphia.

His first big break came here last year and he is now faced with attempting to defend a title for the first time.

Shin Splits kept the 19 year old from participating at the recent Australian Open.

The fifth ranked Sampras put on a spotty show against the talented Washington.

Washington was unable to hold onto his 4-1 advantage in the second set, letting the better known Sampras break back in the ninth game and survive a tense tie breaker that seesawed between the two.

Edberg joins Becker in Brussels semis

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — Second-seeded Stefan Edberg of Sweden, competing with German Boris Becker for the world's top place, Thursday joined him into the quarterfinals of the \$600,000 Donnay Indoor Championship, defeating Far Cash of Australia 3-6, 6-1, 6-4.

Top-seeded Becker, playing to maintain his 1 ranking in the world, earlier Thursday struggled past fellow-German Eric Jelen 7-6 (7-2) 7-6 (7-5) to move into the quarterfinals.

Seeded players Jakob Hlasek of Switzerland and Soviet Andrei Chesnokov also scored straight-set wins Thursday to advance in the ATP-event.

Hlasek, the no. 8 seed here, swept past Mats Wilander 6-1, 7-5. Chesnokov, No. 6, beat Yugoslav Goran Prpic 6-1, 7-6 (7-2).

Guy Forget of France and Michael Chang of the United States, no. 4 and 7 respectively, are already through to the quarterfinals together with Swiss Marc Rosset, who is ranked 23rd in the world.

Becker will play Chang and Edberg will meet Hlasek in the quarterfinals. In other quarterfinals, Soviet Andrei Chesnokov will play compatriot Andrei Cherkasov and Rosset will play Becker.

Becker survived a tense three-setter he rallied to defeat the Soviet Union's Alexander Volkov.

Becker Wednesday criticised the one-year-old Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) Tour for making him play more than ever.

ATP Tour was set up partly because players felt they had to play many tournaments but Becker said: "I've played more than I ever played in my life, which is not the real thing, for me anyway.

"In order to stay number one, two or three, you have to play almost 20 tournaments a year and, in my opinion, is way too much."

Becker, the world's top-ranked player, needed two tiebreakers to defeat Jelen 7-6 (7-2), 7-6 (7-5).

"I'm more or less satisfied with the present level of my game," Becker said, "even if sometimes it's somewhat irregular. But I did some good things. Let's say this relative unsteadiness is due to a lack of concentration. I don't believe I have to specifically improve one of my shots."

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH
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GIVE UP THE RIGHT TRICK

Both vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
A J 5 3
9 8 6 4
J 10
4 2

WEST
10 6
5
A K 7 6 5 2
A 8 6 3

EAST
K Q 9 8
9 8 4 3
Q J 10 9 7

SOUTH
7 4
7 A K Q J 10 7 3 2
Q
K 5

The bidding:
North East South West
Pass Pass 4 Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of
Before committing yourself to a line of play, make sure it is the best available. Quite often there is a plump alternative waiting to be picked.

Once North could not open the bidding, South very sensibly gave up all thoughts of slam and elected to open the bidding with four hearts. Since the hand contained little or no defense, South was more concerned with keeping the opponents out of the auction than with losing the slam bonus. This analysis was accurate, for the opponents could have made a small slam in either minor suit.

mark.

His serve was not bad, but he double faulted twice in the second set tie breaker.

"I had a good first set," said Sampras, who will meet ninth seeded Petr Korda in the quarterfinals. "It's the way I should play. I let it slip in the second set. My confidence is good, but I'm not pleased with the way I played in the second set."

The 97th-ranked Washington is a big server and an excellent athlete.

But Sampras has a little more ability and experience which makes the difference. Sampras was able to worm his way out of bad situations more often than Washington.

He saved five break points in the match, only letting Washington break his serve in the fourth game of the second set.

Washington was unable to hold onto his 4-1 advantage in the second set, letting the better known Sampras break back in the ninth game and survive a tense tie breaker that seesawed between the two.

Sampras, surely one of America's new boy wonders, didn't look all that wonderful — his forehand was shaky and his approach shots were missing their

"I was a little tight in the tie breaker," Sampras admitted. "I had those two double faults at important points. But I managed to win and that's really important to me."

The 68th-ranked Muller represents one of Lendl's worst nightmares. Muller is a fiery left hander who never gives up. Lendl dreads playing lefties — John McEnroe and Jimmy Connors caused him plenty of grief in his early career.

"He hits such big serves and doesn't put that many balls in play," Lendl said. "I can't remember the last time I played a lefty."

The third-ranked Lendl, who plays the seventh seeded Michael Stich in the quarters, finally broke Muller in the eleventh game to serve for the set.

But Lendl played loose to double fault at 30-40 in the next game, to send the match into a tie breaker.

When Lendl blasted a forehand return off a bullet serve of Muller's to go ahead 6-4 in the tie breaker, he took control of the match, winning a routine second set.

Navratilova reaches Chicago semifinals

CHICAGO (R) — Top-seed Martina Navratilova has defeated Anne Smith 6-1, 6-2 to advance to the semifinals of the \$350,000 Virginia Slims of Chicago Women's Tennis Tournament.

In other play, fifth-seed Zina Garrison beat Rosalyn Fairbank-Nideffer 6-2, 6-2 to reach the quarterfinals. Helena Sukova, seeded sixth, defeated Kathy Rinaldi 6-2, 6-2 and seventh-seed Amy Frazier beat Brenda Schultz 6-3, 6-4 to also reach the quarterfinals.

Navratilova showed her game plan immediately, by coming to the net at almost every opportunity. She rushed 44 times and earned 32 points for her efforts. As a result, Smith was forced into attempting mostly futile passing shots and lobs.

There were five service breaks in the first set. Navratilova went up 3-0 and Smith broke back in the fourth game with the help of three unforced errors.

Navratilova broke right back to win the fifth game, held her own service in the sixth and broke Smith again to take the set as Smith committed three unforced errors.

"Smitty didn't serve as well as she can," Navratilova said. "She has no in-between serve. It's either hard and risky or soft and short that I can come in on effectively. I returned them much better tonight."

Both players held their first service in the second set and then Smith played her best game of the night.

Navratilova charged the net four consecutive times and Smith passed her with pinpoint accuracy hitting four consecutive shots down the line.

Navratilova appeared slightly unversed as she gave up the first three points in game four but turned the set around quickly. She rallied to win after deuce and then reeled off the next four straight for the win, getting 18 winners in 26 net rushes.

"I'm getting to the ball quicker and getting balls I couldn't get three months ago," said Navratilova, who underwent knee surgery last year.

Although the score was one-sided, Zina Garrison had to work for her two set win, as Fairbank stayed at the baseline for most of the match.

"She is a really weird player," said Garrison. "She has pace on her forehand but doesn't have any pace on her backhand. Her serve can be a weapon and she tries to keep you off balance."

Garrison's best shots came on service returns of which she won 56 per cent. She held 73 per cent of her own serves.

Yamaguchi favoured to win U.S. Skating Championship

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Kristi Yamaguchi took a short step toward her first national championship and, perhaps, a world title, when she won the original programme at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships.

Yamaguchi, the favourite with three-time U.S. and defending world titlist Jill Trenary injured, was first with eight of nine judges in taking the original, worth one-third of the total score. The free skate will be Saturday.

With Trenary sidelined and 1989 world winner Midori Ito of Japan out of training after jaw surgery, the American champion probably will be favoured for the world next month at Munich, Germany. Yamaguchi, 19, of Fremont, California, finished second to Trenary at the nationals in 1989 and '90.

"What?" Yamaguchi said when informed that Ito might not be in Munich, either. "I didn't know anything about it."

Meanwhile the World Figure Skating Championship, in doubt as recently as two weeks ago, now might be without its two best women.

The world, scheduled for March 12-17 at Munich, Germany, definitely will be missing defending champion Jill Trenary. She is sidelined after ankle surgery that forced her out of this week's U.S. Championships.

And 1989 world title Midori Ito of Japan is out of training after surgery on her jaw, leaving the path to the world crown without the major obstacles for the American champ. If both Trenary and Ito miss the worlds, it would leave Holly Cook of Bountiful, Utah, as the highest-ranked returning skater.

Cook isn't even the favourite here, however. Kristi Yamaguchi, the two-time U.S. runner-up, has that role, with Cook, Nancy Kerrigan, Tonya Harding and Tonia Kwiatkowski as strong contenders.

"Skating is my life," said Harding, 20, who fell to seventh at last year's nationals, when she was hampered by the flu. "This is what I want to do, this is what I want to be."

Next was Nancy Kerrigan of Stoneham, Massachusetts, followed by Holly Cook, the bronze medalist at last year's worlds and national champion.

The top three finishers will make the world team.

Yamaguchi skated a clean, well-designed routine to Spanish music that included a triple lutz-double toe loop combination. Harding did the same combination and appeared to land on two feet on her triple lutz. The judges, however, either didn't notice or ignored that gaffe.

"There was no problem," Harding said of her combination.

Yamaguchi's performance was polished as well as more difficult than most of the others.

"Whether Ito is here or not, I still have to perform. There are so many other great skaters here who could put up a fight."

Except for Ito, there aren't any skaters abroad who seem capable of putting up a strong fight

it for a few months and I'm fairly comfortable now."

Later Thursday night, the championship original dance, worth 30 per cent of the overall

dance score, was held.

Earlier, Craig Heath of Mill Valley, California, became the first man to win a gold in compulsory figures. This year, the figures and free skating are separate events at the U.S. Championships.

"Figures are really important for warming your body and I always stay better after I do figures everyday," said Heath, who also is competing in free skate. "So why not do figures?"

"Actually, they've been better because I've been more relaxed."

"We've seen her out of training before and hurt and she would go on and compete," added Christy Ness, Yamaguchi's coach.

"She has been discharged from the hospital and is OK now," said her coach, Machiko Yamada. "But I am not sure if she will be

able to compete in the World Championships because of lack of training."

The 21-year-old Ito said she will skip the Winter World University Games, starting March 2 in Sapporo, Japan. In mid-January, she won the all Japanese title for the seventh straight year.

Dedic also said the world event was likely to have been postponed or canceled as recently as late January.

"As of two weeks ago, the World Championships was crumpled," he said. "It was not going to go on and we would try to save it the best we could, but it didn't look very promising."

"However, as of last week, the German Federation has been able to secure new insurance (costing 500,000 marks — some \$333,000) with Lloyds of London. They also have to spend 250,000 marks for initial security."

"The German Federation was expecting 1-million-mark profit from the championships. But they've had to spend this (for insurance and security)."

"The championships definitely will be held, as of now. Everything is ready to go and looks very nice."

Except for the women's field.

Horoscope not received

THE BETTER HALF

By Harris



JUMBLE

THAT SCRABBLE WORD GAME
by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

FYLOT

THACC

KOFERD

BOYDEM

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: EAGLE HOARD DECODE URCHIN

Answer: This vote can be the deciding factor in an election—THE "UNDECIDED"

THE Daily Crossword

by Frank R. Jackson

ACROSS

1. Protection

5. Digs water

10. Oct. and Nov.

13. Cupid's weapon

14. Engrossed

15. Name of Mears

17. Crowning

18. Butterine

19. Names in 39A

22. TV's Ollie

23. Strong; pref.

24. Dancer

27. Mountain

30. Catalogue

33. Trim branches

34. Kind of club

38. Opened by 15D (with "The")

Economy

Bahrain central banker says Gulf too important to abandon

BAHRAIN (R) — Foreign bankers who have turned their backs on the Gulf since the invasion of Kuwait cannot afford to ignore the region, says a Gulf central banker.

"The Gulf region represents a too important banking market to abandon," Bahrain Monetary Agency (BMA) Governor Abdullah Saif told Reuters in a written response to questions.

Bahrain has been badly hit by the economic fallout from the Iraqi invasion and Gulf war. A key regional banking centre, the island state has watched billions of dollars flow out of its offshore banking system to safe havens abroad.

But Saif insists bankers will rediscover Bahrain and that those who have remained loyal will be remembered.

"It is reasonable to assume that those banks which had remained committed to the Gulf region at these difficult times would have naturally earned the goodwill of clients and would be more than compensated after the war in terms of more business directed to them," Saif said.

He stressed that as a matter of policy the BMA would treat all banks equally within its selective licensing policy.

Gulf bankers have complained of a lack of support from international banks since the Aug. 2 invasion.

Interest lending all but dried up, causing liquidity problems for many Gulf-based banks and finance houses, with foreign banks unwilling to expose themselves to Gulf risks.

"They didn't bother to really assess the risk," said one foreign banker. "They didn't look at the map, just thought Kuwait, Bahrain, UAE — all in the Gulf, same risk."

Bankers in the Gulf say Japanese banks in particular cut off the lifeline of interbank credit and sharply cut back their own Gulf operations — withdrawing key expatriate staff shortly after Iraqi tanks rolled into Kuwait.

Saif said he expects banks to return.

The job of recycling the vast petro-dollars fed into the region from oil exports must go on.

Bahrain would remain pivotal in that role, providing tax incentives, good communications and a good lifestyle, he said.

"We are confident that once the hostility in the Gulf is over, banking services will remain its national hub of banking..." Saif said.

The Gulf war has cost Bahrain's banking system dearly. Total assets of Bahrain offshore banking units (OBUs) fell to \$57.7 billion in November from \$61.6 billion on Aug. 2 and \$71.2 billion in July and a peak of \$73 billion in March 1990.

Saif said he believed the BMA and other central banks had successfully shored up the regional banking system against the liquidity squeeze brought by the total of 54 OBUs against \$5 on Aug. 2.

Without giving details or saying whether they had been successful, Saif said the BMA and other central banks in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) had put pressure on international banks to restore lines of credit to local finance houses.

Since the Gulf crisis and the outbreak of war the BMA had pledged to support commercial bank liquidity by repurchase agreement (REPO) financing, suspending treasury bill issues, and encouraging banks to roll over deposits and liquidate some assets.

"The invasion of Kuwait and ... and outbreak of the Gulf war has ... disrupted and dampened that progress. But ... the adverse effects of the crisis were substantially offset by the commitment of banks to the region and their confidence in its prospects and potentials," Saif said.

"It is of paramount importance and reassuring for both the banks and the banking public to know that banking authorities stand ready to back and support efforts to weather the crisis," Saif said. "Hopefully the BMA has already demonstrated by the measures it has taken that it is able to live up to that role."

Saif said only three small OBUs had left Bahrain since the Gulf crisis. Two new institutions had been licensed leaving a total of 54 OBUs against \$5 on Aug. 2.

Major OBUs including some Gulf-owned banks reinforced their liquidity by selling assets, rolling over deposits, and asking shareholders and owners for support, Saif said.

Bahrain had been battered by the Gulf crisis just as it was recovering from a Gulf recession caused by the low oil prices of the early to mid-1980s, but Saif said it would recover.

The citrus industry is already hurting because of ever scarcer water for irrigation and a rise in farmers turning to more lucrative products.

Iraqi Scud missile attacks in January brought the harvest to a complete halt for more than a week as the army ordered Israelis to stay indoors and imposed a curfew on the 1.75 million Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israelis now venture out during the day but only 6,000 Palestinians of the more than 100,000 who usually work in Israel have been allowed back to work.

Israel, worried Palestinians may show their support for Iraq with guerrilla attacks on Jews, has kept most of them confined to the occupied territories.

"Harvesting was down to zero at the start of the war. Now production is about 60 per cent," Margolit said.

Palestinians make up the brunt

of the 6,000-strong labour force needed to harvest the citrus crop and they are being replaced largely by inexperienced young Israelis.

"These guys fill about half as many boxes per head as the usual workers," said Avraham Ben-David, nodding towards five Israelis replacing the 30 Palestinians who normally pick oranges in the orchards he manages.

"I think the harvest here will be about half the usual," said Ben-David, who oversees some 2,400 trees in Hod Hasharon, east of Tel Aviv.

"The only reason it's even that much is because we got 15 per cent of it in before the war began and I'll only reach 50 per cent if they let more Palestinians come back to work before the harvest ends in March," he added.

The Israelis say the pay is so low they consider themselves volunteers. Fruit pickers in Israel earn about 25 shekels (\$12.50) for each half-tonne box they fill.

"I volunteered because it hurts to think of all this fruit just rotting," said Rachel Diamant, a newspaper editor temporarily laid off due to the war.

"The pay is ridiculous — I fill about a box a day — and it's made me realise how much the Palestinians get screwed (exploited)," she said.

The curfew has halted work and therefore income and pushed the 1.75 million residents toward poverty. The human rights report estimated losses to Feb. 10 at \$131 million.

A slight easing of curfews this month allowed some people to work in the territories but most areas remain under curfew and travel is banned. More vital are restrictions on work in Israel, which some Israelis would like to make permanent.

"Lifting the curfew itself will certainly not relieve the economic pressure," David Kretzmer, a professor of law at Hebrew University, told the news conference.

More than 100,000 Palestinians worked in Israel before the Gulf war, a third of all jobs held by residents of Gaza and the West Bank.

A total ban on Arab entry into Israel was eased this week, but only to admit a few thousand each day. They are escorted to citrus and construction industries that depend on their labour.

"The state of war does not lessen the duty of the state to respect human rights," said the human rights report.

"Any step such as curfew or closure which inflicts heavy damages on civilians, steadily worsening with each passing day, must not be continued indefinitely," it said.

Despite the unprecedented length of the curfews, the report said 1,291 of 3,647 people arrested were accused of crimes other than breaking the curfew. It said they included prominent Palestinians disliked for their political views.

Illustrating the curfew's effect on health, the report said Moked Hospital, the best-known facility for Palestinians, had registered only 150 births in the past month instead of a normal total of 500.

Schools, which only reopened on Jan. 13 after being ordered by Israeli authorities to take a two-week break, have been closed throughout the Gulf war.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency, established after the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948 to care for Palestinian refugees, distributes food to registered refugees.

It now wants to start giving food to the entire population of the occupied territories from Feb. 15 because of the growing poverty but needs Israeli approval.

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1991 7

Palestinians live in worst poverty

War squeezes Israeli citrus industry

EC proposes pan-European 'energy charter'

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) — The EC Commission has proposed a "European energy charter" to bring the financial, technological and energy resources of east and west Europe into a single European market.

The idea comes from Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers. Although still vague, it seeks to boost cooperation in energy among countries between the Atlantic and the Urals — an ideal

of the 35-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

EC Energy Commissioner Antonio Cardoso e Cunha told reporters the charter would bring together energy resources, technology and consumers from across the continent.

He said it would set common rules on free trade, investment, access to and exploitation of resources, technical and safety stan-

dards, and research and development.

Increasing energy trade with the Soviet Union, the world's largest oil producer, would lessen western Europe's dependence on oil from the Middle East and other unstable sources.

The Soviet Union is interested

in an energy charter, said Cardoso e Cunha who has visited Moscow to gauge Soviet reaction to the plan.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Thursday, February 14, 1991 Central Bank official rates		
Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	132.9	133.7
French franc	514.2	514.2
Japanese yen (for 100)	514.2	514.2
Swiss franc	121.3	121.3
Deutschmark	121.3	121.3
Pound Sterling	1315.1	1325.0
Belgian franc	121.7	125.4
Swedish krona	121.7	125.4
Swiss franc	529.5	535.8

WORLD STOCK MARKET

SYDNEY — A barrage of buy orders in the last 30 minutes of trading pushed the market into positive territory. The All Ordinaries index closed 3.8 points stronger at 1,376.60.

TOKYO — Stocks closed slightly easier but well off afternoon lows, as the market followed Wall Street down to end its eight-day rally with some profit-taking. Underlying bullishness limited the decline, brokers said. The Nikkei index slipped 12.63 points to 25,343.74.

SINGAPORE — The exchange was closed for the Chinese new year. In a half-day session Thursday, the Straits Times index advanced 15.45 points to 1,338.70.

BOMBAY — Prices rose for the second day on buying by state-owned investment houses. Brokers said the market undercurrent was suspect. The BSE index rose 15.37 points to 1,039.60. The National Index gained 4.52 to 526.75.

FRANKFURT — Shares rose sharply on news Iraq was ready to withdraw from Kuwait but retreated a bit when its conditions for such a move became clear. The DAX index ended 44.67 higher at 1,531.19 after hitting an intra-day high of 1,540.68.

ZURICH — Shares closed up but below the day's high after fluctuating wildly following the Iraqi report. The all-share SPI index rose 12 to 996.5.

PARIS — Shares ended at their highest for more than two months but below their peak in hectic afternoon trading following the reports from Baghdad. The CAC-40 index ended up 17.71 at 1,670.39.

LONDON — Shares ended below 2,300. They drifted downwards in muddled afternoon trading as early hopes that Iraq would be ready to quit Kuwait receded. The FTSE index ended up 2.5 at 2,296.9.

NEW YORK — Blue chips were steady at moderately higher levels at midday. The Dow was up 16 at 2,893.

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

One Sterling	1.9800/10	U.S. dollar
One U.S. dollar	1.1522/32	Canadian dollar
1.4673/80	Deutschmarks	Dutch guilders
1.6530/40	Dutch guilders	Swiss francs
1.2576/83	Swiss francs	Belgian francs
30.20/23	French francs	Italian lire
4.9960/10	French francs	Japanese yen
1103/104	French francs	Swedish kronas
129.70/80	Italian lire	Norwegian kronas
5.4990/40	Japanese yen	Danish kronas
5.7400/50	Swedish kronas	U.S. dollars
5.6440/90	Norwegian kronas	
One ounce of gold	365.10/365.60	

Performances: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

Performances: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30

Performances: 12:00, 3:00, 5:15, 7:15, 9:15

Performances: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

The BIS said the reopening of the market for equity-related issues for Japanese borrowers released peak-up borrowing demand.

In addition, the negative impact on Japanese bank capital from a continued fall in share prices persuaded authorities to allow banks to raise subordinated debt capital in the international markets.

The BIS said banking activity with Iraq and Kuwait was seriously disrupted after the Iraqi invasion of its smaller neighbour in August and the subsequent international agreement to freeze business with both countries. But the impact on banks' outstanding positions regarding Iraq and Kuwait was marginal.

The BIS reported a shift in bank and non-bank deposits from the Middle Eastern members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to Britain, Switzerland and the United States. But it gave no figures.

Oilty Ocal, general manager of Turkey's state pipeline agency Botas, was quoted as saying one million cubic metres would be delivered daily to Turkey from the reserves near the Turkish border with a capacity of about cubic metres.

Botas, said that the reserves were situated about 250 kilometres away from the border and the two countries would participate equally in the laying of pipes across the border.

Anatolian said the state-run Turkish Petroleum Company (TPAO) would prepare a feasibility study on extracting gas from the Syrmi field, which it did not name.

Vladimir Shcherbakov, head of the Soviet state committee on labour and social issues, told Soviet television that consumers would also be fully compensated for the higher costs of children's goods, clothes and footwear.

Turkey to extract natural gas in Syria

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkey will extract natural gas in "Syria close to the Turkish border," the semi-official Anatolian News Agency said.

Okta Yurul, general manager of Turkey's state pipeline agency Botas, was quoted as saying one million cubic metres would be delivered daily to Turkey from the reserves near the Turkish border with a capacity of about cubic metres.

Botas, said that the reserves were situated about 250 kilometres away from the border and the two countries would participate equally in the laying of pipes across the border.

Anatolian said the state-run Turkish Petroleum Company (TPAO) would prepare a feasibility study on extracting gas from the Syrmi field, which it did not name.

Along with wages, pensions, children's welfare payments and other incomes would also be increased to compensate for the entire increase in food prices and

about half of the other price hikes, the newspaper reported Wednesday.

The newspaper did not indicate when the price hikes might be introduced, but noted that the plan must also be approved by the national legislature which is to meet next week. Another federal official said earlier the proposals required the approval of the federation council which is headed by President Gorbachev and includes the leaders of the 15 Soviet republics.

Vladimir Shcherbakov, head of the Soviet state committee on labour and social issues, told Soviet television that consumers would also be fully compensated for the higher costs of children's goods, clothes and footwear.

U.S. terms Soviet plot charges 'ridiculous'; weighs aid to Baltics

WASHINGTON (AP) — The State Department has dismissed as "ridiculous" a Soviet charge that Western and Soviet banks had engaged in conspiracy to destroy the country's financial system.

"The story is a transparent effort by Soviet authorities to blame foreigners for economic and financial difficulties that result primarily from the Soviet Union's own domestic policies," spokeswoman Margaret Twitler said.

The allegation was made Tuesday by Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov, who said the conspirators, whom he did not identify, had been plotting to overthrow President Mikhail Gorbachev.

He said the plotters had planned to flood the Soviet economy with billions of rubles but that the scheme was thwarted by recent monetary measures.

Twitler said the allegations can only further damage prospects for attracting foreign investment into the Soviet Union.

"The charge is ridiculous," she said. "It's counterproductive to stir up fears of foreigners and

foreign banks. Such statements contradict other Soviet efforts to attract foreign investment and expertise."

She said that during Pavlov's tenure as finance minister, the government printed tens of billions of rubles — a policy that is at the root of the USSR's current monetary difficulties.

The Bush administration is considering economic and diplomatic steps to expand U.S. support for the rebellious Baltic republics in their drive for independence from the Soviet Union.

The measures under consideration include the opening of information offices in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and providing technical assistance for their economies. U.S. officials said Wednesday.

A senior American diplomat, Richard Miles, has made two visits to the capitals of the three republics and will hold more frequent discussions with independent leaders, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

President George Bush announced last week the United States would provide medical aid

to the Baltics. The hospital ship Hope, under contract to the Agency for International Development, set sail Tuesday night with supplies.

The medical help may only be the first step in a vastly expanded programme. New initiatives are being prepared within the State Department for the consideration of administration decision-makers.

"It is not a new policy. We are trying to demonstrate our political support," an official who spoke on condition of anonymity said.

"So far what we may do is at the talking stage."

The United States has never recognised the incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia into the Soviet Union in World War II. But successive administrations kept still until the independence movement gathered force amid the more liberal atmosphere permitted by President Mikhail S. Gorbachev.

For instance, the officials said, to open U.S. information offices in Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn, the three Baltic capitals, the United States may have to deal with the Soviet Union to have the offices accredited.

VIENNA (R) — Negotiators from East and West are stalling talks on an agreement cutting troop levels in Europe after Western accusations that Moscow is circumventing a treaty slashing conventional weapons, diplomats said Friday.

The U.S. State Department said Thursday that Western delegations to the 22-nation Convention on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) talks had decided to do no substantive business for the time being, and the diplomats said most Eastern delegates shared this view.

A Western delegate said: "There was general agreement that there was not much point negotiating on new obligations while existing ones were not being met."

Ironically, the fact that the United States does not recognise the incorporation of the Baltics complicates what can be done to help.

For instance, the officials said, to open U.S. information offices in Vilnius, Riga and Tallinn, the three Baltic capitals, the United States may have to deal with the Soviet Union to have the offices accredited.

Vienna troop talks stalled

Cambodian government ready for peace talks

BANGKOK (AP) — Khmer Rouge guerrillas are launching a strong offensive against Cambodia's second-largest city, but the government is ready to resume peace talks at any time, Phnom Penh's foreign minister said Friday.

Asked about the Khmer Rouge shelling of Battambang, a provincial capital in the west, Cambodia's Foreign Minister Hor Nam Hong said, "the other side is launching a very strong offensive. It shows which side wants peace and which side wants to settle the conflict by military means."

He said the government still controls the town.

Hor Nam Hong spoke with a reporter just before starting talks with Thai Premier Chatichai Choonhaven.

It was the last of Chatichai's talks this week with the Cambodian government and the three rebel groups seeking its overthrow, of which the Communist Khmer Rouge is the strongest.

He was trying to encourage flexibility over a U.N. peace plan and to get the Cambodians to iron out differences in talks for which Indonesia has offered to play host. The guerrillas have agreed to attend the talks in Indonesia.

Hor Nam Hong said Phnom Penh was ready for a meeting "anywhere, at any time" of the Supreme National Council. The council, comprising guerrilla and government representatives, is supposed to negotiate a settlement and later guide U.N. involvement in a transitional period before elections.

However, recent statement indicated Phnom Penh was not yielding to guerrilla demands that the government and army be dismantled before the proposed elections.

Che Sim, the no. 2 man of Cambodia's Communist-style party, said Wednesday the government would continue efforts at a negotiated settlement, but on the basis of "the status quo both political and military."

He spoke at the close of a two-day meeting in which national recruitment councils were urged to step up the military draft, the state radio reported Wednesday.

The law, promulgated in July 1989, says all male: citizens from 17 to 30 years of age must enlist "regardless of their religious belief, nationality and social status." Many Cambodians fleeing the expanded draft in recent months have arrived in guerrilla-controlled refugee camps in Thailand, aid officials said.

The CFE negotiators are working on a pact cutting troop levels, to follow a treaty signed last November which set ceilings on the amount of tanks, guns and planes that could be held.

But Western delegates have accused Moscow of trying to get around the CFE treaty by reclassifying army units as navy, which are not covered by the agreement, or pulling equipment east of the Urals, outside the treaty zone.

Phnom Penh has accepted most of the basic points of the U.N. plan, but wants further discussions on its proposals for extensive U.N. involvement in the country's affairs. "Non and military affairs before elections are held. The guerrillas fully accept the plan."

Japan is also continuing mediation efforts. Yukio Imagawa, a minister at the Japanese embassy in Bangkok who played a key role in Cambodian peace talks in Tokyo in June, arrived in Phnom Penh Wednesday for talks there, said a report by SPK, the Cambodian government's official news agency.

Another Japanese embassy official is to hold talks later this month with Chinese leaders, the main backers of the guerrillas.

As peace efforts continue, fighting intensified in northwestern areas of Cambodia bordering Thailand and in the central province of Kompong Thom.

The government news agency Thursday said troops have launched "scores of counterattacks" against the guerrillas in these areas starting the last week of January. Four arms and materials depots in Kompong Thom have been seized, it said.

In Kompong Thom, about 6,000 government troops armed with tanks and heavy artillery are attacking along National Highway 6 from four directions, said a statement Thursday by Sihanouk's group.

In northwestern Siem Reap province, government forces were trying in vain to recapture the districts of Varin and Sra Noy, the statement said.

The guerrillas denied government reports of heavy rebel casualties.

Kompong Thom's capital is 128 kilometres north of Phnom Penh. An official of Sihanouk's group said the Khmer Rouge has been trying to deflect the attacks in Kompong Thom by shelling Battambang, about 280 kilometres northwest of Phnom Penh.

The Khmer Rouge Radio said Wednesday its forces had been shelling Battambang for the past three days, and set the town ablaze. A broadcast Thursday claimed enemy troops who tried to rescue comrades in the town were killed by guerrilla artillery fire.

Communists still dominate Soviet military

MOSCOW (AP) — Eleven months after the Communist Party lost its guaranteed monopoly on power, it remains the only political party active in the military, a general said Wednesday.

"For the time being, we have to multiparty system," Gen. Alexander Ovchenikov, first deputy political officer for the army and navy, told reporters.

While the Communists maintain 37,000 party organisations inside the military, other political parties have none, he said.

Maj.-Gen. Boris Goloshkov of the Soviet Border Patrol said he knew of only one case of a soldier announced that he had joined the reformist Democratic Party and offered political newspaper for sale in his unit.

All Soviet generals still belong to the Communist Party as do the vast majority of other officers, Ovchenikov said.

Authority over military promotions was officially transferred from the Communist Party Central Committee to the Defence Ministry last spring. But recommendations for promotions are still decided by boards of officers, almost all them Communist Party members.

While the national Communist Party is losing millions of members, Ovchenikov said the military's party rolls have climbed slightly. He said about 40,000 soldiers have joined the party while about 35,000 have quit. There are about 1 million party members among the more than 4 million Soviet members of the military.

The Soviet military also has tens of thousands of political officers who were assigned full-time to enforce Communist policy. Now, these officers have been told to promote the policies of the Soviet government. But since the government is still controlled by communists, there has been limited practical change.

Asked if the army's top Com-

mandant Party Council agrees with right-wing calls for imposition of presidential rule or martial law in areas of political or ethnic tensions, Ovchenikov said the council is not authorised to decide government policy.

Blanc, 52, was in critical but stable condition at Santa Paula memorial hospital, nursing supervisor Cecelia Moore said. Blanc suffered a fractured leg, broken ribs, a bruised kidney and a ruptured lung. He was using a breathing machine.

Douglas, 74, was listed in fair condition at Cedars-Sinai Medic-

al Centre in Los Angeles. Spokesman Ron Wise said the actor, who wears a heart pacemaker, suffered a scalp cut, scrapes and bruises.

"Neither of them have much recollection of what happened after the lift-off," said Eric Douglas.

Beverly Hills police officer Michael Carra, who was in the helicopter with Douglas and Blanc, was treated for bruises Wednesday night and released.

The helicopter and plane collided about 40 feet (some 12 metres) above ground shortly after both aircraft took off.

Blanc was piloting the helicopter, the younger Douglas said Thursday in Los Angeles. Previously, he had said Carra was the helicopter pilot.

Douglas expects to be released during the weekend, his son said.

Also Thursday, National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigators had an identical airplane re-enact the plane's takeoff at Santa Paula Airport.

The pilot, Bret Ebaugh, reported there was no forward visibility from the cockpit of the high-speed aircraft during takeoff.

"Once you apply the power and you're lined up with the runway, you're blind," said Ebaugh, a pilot who works for CP Aviation at the small airport.

NTSB investigator Thomas Wilcox said witnesses report both aircraft took off at the same time. Then the Bell 206 long-range helicopter, which had been flying parallel to the Pitts special stunt plane, flew across the runway.

COLUMN 8

Dance With Wolves gets 12 Oscar nominations

LOS ANGELES (R) — Kevin Costner, a Hollywood maverick who went out and made a three-hour Western epic after all the major studio turned him away, saw "Dances With Wolves" top the Oscar nominations with 12.

Costner, a respected actor, made the film mostly with own money after two years of peddling his story of a cavalry officer who leaves the army to live with Sioux Indians in the American plains.

Hor Nam Hong said Phnom Penh was ready for a meeting "anywhere, at any time" of the Supreme National Council. The council, comprising guerrilla and government representatives, is supposed to negotiate a settlement and later guide U.N. involvement in a transitional period before elections.

He said the government still controls the town.

Hor Nam Hong spoke with a reporter just before starting talks with Thai Premier Chatichai Choonhaven.

It was the last of Chatichai's talks this week with the Cambodian government and the three rebel groups seeking its overthrow, of which the Communist Khmer Rouge is the strongest.

He was trying to encourage flexibility over a U.N. peace plan and to get the Cambodians to iron out differences in talks for which Indonesia has offered to play host. The guerrillas have agreed to attend the talks in Indonesia.

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However, recent statement indicated Phnom Penh was not yielding to guerrilla demands that the government and army be dismantled before the proposed elections.

Che Sim, the no. 2 man of Cambodia's Communist-style party, said Wednesday the government would continue efforts at a negotiated settlement, but on the basis of "the status quo both political and military."

He spoke at the close of a two-day meeting in which national recruitment councils were urged to step up the military draft, the state radio reported Wednesday.

The law, promulgated in July 1989, says all male: citizens from 17 to 30 years of age must enlist "regardless of their religious belief, nationality and social status." Many Cambodians fleeing the expanded draft in recent months have arrived in guerrilla-controlled refugee camps in Thailand, aid officials said.

The CFE negotiators are working on a pact cutting troop levels, to follow a treaty signed last November which set ceilings on the amount of tanks, guns and planes that could be held.

But Western delegates have accused Moscow of trying to get around the CFE treaty by reclassifying army units as navy, which are not covered by the agreement, or pulling equipment east of the Urals, outside the treaty zone.

Phnom Penh has accepted most of the basic points of the U.N. plan, but wants further discussions on its proposals for extensive U.N. involvement in the country's affairs. "Non and military affairs before elections are held. The guerrillas fully accept the plan."

Japan is also continuing mediation efforts. Yukio Imagawa, a minister at the Japanese embassy in Bangkok who played a key role in Cambodian peace talks in Tokyo in June, arrived in Phnom Penh Wednesday for talks there, said a report by SPK, the Cambodian government's official news agency.

Another Japanese embassy official is to hold talks later this month with Chinese leaders, the main backers of the guerrillas.

As peace efforts continue, fighting intensified in northwestern areas of Cambodia bordering Thailand and in the central province of Kompong Thom.

The government news agency Thursday said troops have launched "scores of counterattacks" against the guerrillas in these areas starting the last week of January. Four arms and materials depots in Kompong Thom have been seized, it said.

In Kompong Thom, about 6,000 government troops armed with tanks and heavy artillery are attacking along National Highway 6 from four directions, said a statement Thursday by Sihanouk's group.

In northwestern Siem Reap province, government forces were trying in vain to recapture the districts of Varin and Sra Noy, the statement said.

The guerrillas denied government reports of heavy rebel casualties.

Kompong Thom's capital is 128 kilometres north of Phnom Penh. An official of Sihanouk's group said the Khmer Rouge has been trying to deflect the attacks in Kompong Thom by shelling Battambang, about 280 kilometres northwest of Phnom Penh.

The Khmer Rouge Radio said Wednesday its forces had been shelling Battambang for the past three days, and set the town ablaze. A broadcast Thursday claimed enemy troops who tried to rescue comrades in the town were killed by guerrilla artillery fire.

Actor recovering from helicopter crash

SANTA PAULA, California (AP) — Actor Kirk Douglas

nursed cuts and bruises but cartoon voice artist Noel Blanc was in critical condition as investigators tried to unravel how their helicopter crashed with an airplane.

The single-engine Aerobatic plane after the collision Wednesday. A veteran airline captain in the stunt plane was killed along with a student.

Blanc, 52, was in critical but stable condition at Santa Paula memorial hospital, nursing supervisor Cecelia Moore said. Blanc suffered a fractured leg, broken ribs, a bruised kidney and a ruptured lung. He was using a breathing machine.

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RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Twenty men armed with pistols and machine guns robbed a bank in northern Brazil and made off with the equivalent of \$12 million, the country's biggest heist ever, a TV network